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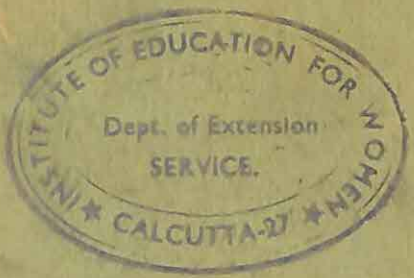
Colloquial English Pronunciation

JULIAN T. PRING



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COLLOQUIAL ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

Colloquial English Pronunciation

BY

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Foreword

by

DANIEL JONES, M.A., DR. PHIL., LL.D.
Professor Emeritus of Phonetics in the University of London

Although there are already a number of books in existence designed to help foreign learners in the task of acquiring a good pronunciation of English, there is still room for a manual of the present type, in which an attempt is made to supply, as far as possible, a teacher's practical assistance to those who have to work on their own. Special attention is given to exercises suitable for overcoming common difficulties of pronunciation, with clear descriptions of the right way to practise them. Emphasis is laid on uttering not only isolated words, but especially whole phrases and sentences with fluency and correct rhythm.

Mr. Pring, who is a skilled phonetician, is well qualified to write such a book, as he has been teaching English on phonetic lines for nearly twenty years. I can strongly recommend his present work.

London, 30*th April*, 1958 DANIEL JONES

Introduction

This book has been written to help foreign students of English pronunciation. Its purpose is to show how to put sounds together in words, and words together in sentences. It explains the *variations* of sound which occur in continuous speech, and which give special difficulty to foreign learners. The emphasis is mainly on *groups of words*, because fluency in a new language is gained by working in whole phrases rather than single words.

It is a well-known difficulty of English that the spelling is not always a clear guide to the pronunciation. This is not because English spelling is bad. On the contrary, it is a presentation of the language which no other scheme of description can hope to approach in subtlety and comprehensiveness. If English is widely known throughout the world, that is made possible by the rationalising power of its spelling, which transcends the disintegrating effect of so many dialects and accents, and stands as a constant beacon of unity amid diversity.

But in order to represent all forms of pronunciation, spelling must be sufficiently detached from each particular one. This may cause perplexities for the learner. He is, therefore, likely to benefit by the use of phonetic transcriptions, which not only remind him of the right pronunciation, but also mark variations which are not shown by the spelling.

In this book, all the exercises are given in ordinary spelling and phonetic spelling, side by side. It is not meant for beginners, and you are expected to have some

idea of the sounds of English. But you need not have any previous knowledge of phonetics. The basic values of the phonetic symbols can quickly be learnt from the table at the beginning; and the gramophone records give you a model of the sounds whenever you wish to hear them. The phonetic transcription is the same as that which is used in two standard works: *An Outline of English Phonetics* and *An English Pronouncing Dictionary* by Daniel Jones. The pronunciation recommended is a type of 'standard southern English', which means the speech of an educated person having no marked regional characteristics. It should, of course, be remembered that other forms of pronunciation may exist, beside the ones mentioned in the book.

Although phonetic spelling tells us some things which the ordinary spelling does not, yet even so it does not tell us all we need to know about pronunciation. It shows the order in which sounds occur, but it does not mark all the variations that arise when we put them together in words. You must realise that a 'sound' may vary in quality according to its position in a word (for example, *title* has two different t-sounds, and *level* has two different l-sounds). So, in addition to knowing the basic sounds of English, you must also learn how they are modified by their situation.

Many students are too much influenced by writing when they try to speak a foreign language. They transfer the written words, one by one, into speech in a laborious and unnatural manner. That is not good enough. When you have understood the word-for-word structure of a sentence, you must then perform a creative act, moulding the words into phrases that follow the natural flow of living speech. Then you will not only speak as you ought, but you will feel an artist's satisfaction in

something well done. Do not imagine this to be impossibly difficult. Three things are necessary: (i) you must listen to native speakers of English, or some equally good model; (ii) you must understand the phonetic structure of the language, and its relation to writing; (iii) you must practise intelligently.

It is easy to waste time in wrong practice. There is always a danger of this when the student works alone; and so this book tries to give specially clear instructions about what to do when you practise. Do not attempt to work if you are feeling tired or tense. You should only undertake these exercises in a calm, relaxed frame of mind. Use a mirror to watch your tongue and lips, and learn to make various movements without tightening your jaws and throat. Think analytically about the articulation of each single sound; and when you find a difficult passage, tackle the obstacles one at a time. Do not keep on saying a whole phrase or sentence with the same mistakes every time; but isolate each crucial junction or sequence of sounds in turn, and work on it until it is mastered. Repeat the passage as slowly as you like, but firmly and evenly. First, say the parts separately, then put them together. In doing this you will work much as you would in practising music. Ignore conventional divisions into words and bars—that is, do not stop at the end of a word just because it *is* the end. If the noises run on, you must run on with them. Never be in a hurry, but let your utterance be controlled and deliberate. Increasing speed to normal should be the last stage of the exercise.

Finally, remember that no one else can change your pronunciation for you. Others may advise you what to do: you alone can carry it out.

Gramophone Records

A set of two double-sided seven-inch gramophone records has been made of certain passages from this book. They are spoken by the author as a model of the pronunciation described.

> <

The signs > and < are placed in the text to mark the beginning and end, respectively, of each recorded extract. The passages are as follows.

SIDE 1

The Sounds of English (*pages* 1–2)
Vowel Practice (*pages* 4, 8–9, 10)

SIDE 2

Exercises in Weak Forms (*pages* 40, 41–43, 45, 46, 49)

SIDE 3

Grouping of Words (*pages* 58–59, 61, 62, 63–64)

SIDE 4

Analysis of a Passage, Sentence by Sentence (*pages* 64–67)

The set of records, speed $33\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m., is published by Longmans and obtainable through any bookseller.

I

The Sounds of English

Vowels

symbol		keyword	
1.	iː	deed	diːd
2.	i	give	giv
3.	e	bed	bed
4.	æ	black	blæk
5.	ɑː	laugh	lɑːf
6.	ɔ	odd	ɔd
7.	ɔː	bought	bɔːt
8.	u	good	gud
9.	uː	lose	luːz
10.	ʌ	love	lʌv
11.	əː	bird	bəːd
12.	ə	china	ˈtʃainə

Diphthongs

symbol		keyword	
13.	ei	aid	eid
14.	ou	goes	gouz
15.	ai	five	faiv
16.	au	loud	laud
17.	ɔi	voice	vɔis
18.	iə	dear	diə
19.	ɛə	dare	dɛə
20.	ɔə	door	dɔə
21.	uə	tour	tuə

Semivowels

j	yes	jes
w	wet	wet

Consonants

p	pass	pɑ:s	f	face	feis
b	bus	bʌs	v	vote	vout
t	tie	tai	θ	thick	θik
d	do	du:	ð	this	ðis
k	car	kɑ:	s	see	si:
g	go	gou	z	zoo	zu:
m	miss	mis	ʃ	shoe	ʃu:
n	now	nau	ʒ	pleasure	'pleʒə
ŋ	sing	siŋ	tʃ	chin	tʃin
l	let	let	dʒ	just	dʒʌst
	tell	tel	h	heart	hɑ:t
r	rest	rest			

The consonants are grouped as follows:

Plosive	p b t d k g
Nasal	m n ŋ
Liquid { *lateral*	l
r-sounds	r
Fricative	f v θ ð s z ʃ ʒ h
Affricative	tʃ dʒ
Voiced consonants:	b d g m n ŋ l r v ð z ʒ dʒ
Voiceless consonants:	p t k f θ s ʃ h tʃ

The sign : is an indication of length. Placed after a vowel symbol, it shows that that vowel is longer than one which is not so marked.

Stress-accent is shown by the sign ' placed immediately before the stressed syllable.

2

Vowels and Diphthongs

(i) i e æ ɔ u ʌ ə (the 'short' vowels) are relatively shorter than i: ɑ: ɔ: u: ə: (the 'long' vowels). Diphthongs are equal in length to the 'long' vowels. No word ends in e, æ, ɔ or ʌ. ə is almost always unstressed.

(ii) The actual length of a vowel depends on its situation in a word or phrase. Unstressed i and ə are usually very short when they occur immediately before a stressed syllable, ex: *begin* bi'gin, *eleven* i'levn, *today* tə'dei, *about* ə'baut, *a man* ə'mæn, *the boy* ðə'bɔi. Apart from this, the 'short' vowels are not extremely short. It is a common mistake to make the vowel too short and the final consonant too long in words like: *big* big, *get* get, *that* ðæt, *not* nɔt, *top* tɔp, *back* bæk, *yes* jes, *good* gud, *off* ɔf. Other variations of length are noticed in the long vowels and diphthongs, as follows.

(a) They are shorter when unstressed than when stressed:

i: is shorter in *concrete* 'kɔŋkri:t than in *discreet* dis'kri:t

ɔ: is shorter in *record* 'rekɔ:d than in *record* ri'kɔ:d

ou is shorter in *yellow* 'jelou than in *below* bi'lou.

(b) They are shorter in stressed syllables immediately followed by unstressed syllables than in those which are not so followed:

ɑ: is shorter in *father* 'fɑ:ðə than in *far* fɑ:
u: is shorter in *do it* 'du:it than in *do* du:
ei is shorter in *navy* 'neivi than in *nave* neiv

(c) They are shorter before voiceless consonants than before voiced ones:

ə: is shorter in *hurt* hə:t than in *heard* hə:d
ai is shorter in *wife* waif than in *wine* wain
iə is shorter in *pierce* piəs than in *piers* piəz

Avoid making the vowel too long in words like: *both* bouθ, *teeth* ti:θ, *youth* ju:θ, *most* moust, *feast* fi:st, *taught* tɔ:t.

(iii) In three pairs of vowels there is a double distinction of quality and length. They are i:—i, ɔ:—ɔ, and u:—u. Practise the following:

week	wi:k	wick	wik
leave	li:v	live	liv
sheep	ʃi:p	ship	ʃip
green	gri:n	grin	grin
feel	fi:l	fill	fil
caught	kɔ:t	cot	kɔt
dawn	dɔ:n	don	dɔn
short	ʃɔ:t	shot	ʃɔt
forks	fɔ:ks	fox	fɔks
wars	wɔ:z	was	wɔz
food	fu:d	good	gud
boot	bu:t	foot	fut
Luke	lu:k	look	luk
wooed	wu:d	wood	wud
fool	fu:l	full	ful

(iv) In a diphthong, two vowel sounds are joined together to make a single syllable. The jaw, tongue and lips perform a gliding movement from the first element of

the diphthong to the second. But when we say a simple vowel sound, the jaw, tongue and lips do not move while we are uttering it. It is important to observe this difference. Be especially careful to see that ei and ou are really diphthongal. Say the diphthong several times, smoothly, without a break in the chain of sound:

ei—ei—ei—ei—ei

ou—ou—ou—ou—ou

Watch your mouth in a mirror as you do this. You ought to see a clear movement of the jaw and lips with each repetition of the sound. If you cannot see any such movement, you are not making the diphthong properly. Now repeat a simple vowel in the same way:

ɔ:—ɔ:—ɔ:—ɔ:—ɔ:

ə:—ə:—ə:—ə:—ə:

e —e —e —e —e

This time you ought not to see any movement of the jaw and lips. If you can see such a movement, you are not making the simple vowel properly.

(v) In the diphthongs of English the first element is more prominent than the second, and we have a feeling that the pressure falls towards the end of the glide. In ei ai ɔi do not let the i be too conspicuous. Remember that this second element is not a very close vowel. It ought to suggest the i of *bit* rather than the i: of *beat*. When you practise ai and ɔi it may be helpful to aim at something resembling ae and ɔe.

In practising ou, remember that the first element is very similar to the ə: of *bird*. Thus the first part of *boat* sounds rather like the first part of *bird*. Aim at saying əu, and do not let it sound too much like ɔu, ʌu or eu. You may practise the diphthong in two parts, and gradually run them together:

boat	bə:—ut	bəut
go	gə:—u	gəu
home	hə:—um	həum

(vi) In making iə ɛə ɔə uə be sure that the second element is sufficiently open. It is, in fact, rather like the ʌ of *love*, and in practice you might aim at iʌ ɛʌ ɔʌ uʌ. Be sure also that the first element ɛ of ɛə is more open than the e of *get*. It is, in fact, rather like the æ of *bad*.

(vii) Some people do not use the diphthong ɔə, but replace it with the simple vowel ɔ:. These people do not distinguish between *saw* and *sore*, or between *paw* and *pour*, or between *sawed* and *sword*. Some other people, however, do distinguish between these words, as follows:

saw	sɔ:	sore, soar	sɔə
paw	pɔ:	pore, pour	pɔə
sawed	sɔ:d	sword, soared	sɔəd
laud	lɔ:d	lord	lɔəd

When ɔə is used, it is most noticeable at the end of words terminating in *–r* and *–re*, or in stressed syllables when a voiced consonant follows. If a voiceless consonant follows, the simple vowel ɔ: is often used:

fought, fort	fɔ:t
sauce, source	sɔ:s
stalk, stork	stɔ:k

(viii) Avoid using the following sound sequences:

ai
au
u:
i:
} + r + vowel

In each case it is usual to insert ə before the r, so that the sequence becomes:

aiə
auə
uə
iə
} + r + vowel

Examples

Irish	'aiəriʃ	*not*	'airiʃ
tiring	'taiəriŋ	*not*	'tairiŋ
inquiry	iŋ'kwaiəri	*not*	iŋ'kwairi
irony	'aiərəni	*not*	'airəni
Cairo	'kaiərou	*not*	'kairou
Byron	'baiərən	*not*	'bairən
floury	'flauəri	*not*	'flauri
devouring	di'vauəriŋ	*not*	di'vauriŋ
scourer	'skauərə	*not*	'skaurə
our own	auər'oun	*not*	aur'oun
during	'djuəriŋ	*not*	'dju:riŋ
curious	'kjuəriəs	*not*	'kju:riəs
purity	'pjuəriti	*not*	'pju:riti
jury	'dʒuəri	*not*	'dʒu:ri
Europe	'juərəp	*not*	'ju:rəp
tourist	'tuərist	*not*	'tu:rist
period	'piəriəd	*not*	'pi:riəd
hero	'hiərou	*not*	'hi:rou
mysterious	mis'tiəriəs	*not*	mis'ti:riəs
serious	'siəriəs	*not*	'si:riəs
cheery	'tʃiəri	*not*	'tʃi:ri
engineering	endʒi'niəriŋ	*not*	endʒi'ni:riŋ

It is a very common mistake to use the pronunciation shown in the last column. You should be on the watch for this in words spelt with *ir-*, *yr-*, *our-*, *ur-*, *er-*, *eer-*.

(ix) Take special care to distinguish between the following groups of vowels:

there is no sound of friction. (These are mistakes made by Pakistanis, Indians, Japanese and Germans.) Take special care when f or v occurs near w, ex: *swift* swift, *wife* waif, *wave* weiv, *wishful* 'wiʃful, *woven* 'wouvən, *quiver* 'kwivə, *wonderful* 'wʌndəful, *very well* 'veri 'wel, *what for*? 'wɔt 'fɔə? *five square feet* 'faiv 'skwɛə 'fi:t, *a useful word* ə'ju:sfl 'wə:d.

θ AND ð

In θ and ð the lips are not used, but the tongue-tip is raised so that it lightly touches the upper teeth. There is a clear sound of friction. If you find this difficult, hold the tongue-tip lightly between your teeth, and blow. Pull down the lower lip with your fingers when you practise, so as to make sure that you are using the tongue only. Do not round the lips.

Here are some notes on the pronunciation of *th*.

At the beginning of a word:

(i) t in *Thomas* 'tɔməs, *Thames* temz, *thyme* taim.
(ii) ð in *the*, *they*, *this*, *that*, *than*, *then*, *thence*, *there*, *though*, *thus*, *thither* and derivatives.
(iii) θ in other words, ex: *think* θiŋk, *through* θru:, *thirst* θə:st.

In the middle of a word:

(i) θ in words of Latin and Greek origin, ex: *author* 'ɔ:θə, *pathetic* pə'θetik, *cathedral* kə'θi:drəl.
(ii) ð in words of Germanic origin, ex: *father* 'fɑ:ðə, *worthy* 'wə:ði, *leather* 'leðə. Exceptions: *nothing* 'nʌθiŋ, *something*, etc.
(iii) ð in the ending *-the*, ex: *breathe* bri:ð, *bathe* beið, and their inflexions.

At the end of a word:

(i) ð in *with* wið, *smooth* smu:ð, *booth* bu:ð, *bequeath* bi'kwi:ð.

(ii) θ in other words, ex: *mouth* mauθ, *both* bouθ, *smith* smiθ, *death* deθ, *truth* tru:θ, *health* helθ, *tenth* tenθ.

The ending *-ths* is pronounced:

(i) usually ðz after a long vowel or diphthong, ex: *baths* ba:ðz, *truths* tru:ðz, *mouths* mauðz, *wreaths* ri:ðz. But θs if the letter *r* intervenes, ex: *births* bə:θs, *fourths* fɔ:θs.

(ii) θs elsewhere, ex: *breaths* breθs, *deaths* deθs, *months* mʌnθs, *depths* depθs, *smiths* smiθs.

VARIOUS EXERCISES FOR DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN
s ʃ ts tʃ z ʒ dz dʒ

sewing	'souiŋ	showing	'ʃouiŋ
sealed	si:ld	shield	ʃi:ld
sort	sɔ:t	short	ʃɔ:t
parcel	'pɑ:sl	partial	'pɑ:ʃl
mass	mæs	mash	mæʃ
she sells	'ʃi: 'selz	sea shells	'si: 'ʃelz
Caesar	'si:zə	seizure	'si:ʒə
composer	kəm'pouzə	composure	kəm'pouʒə
shoes	ʃu:z	choose	tʃu:z
washing	'wɔʃiŋ	watching	'wɔtʃiŋ
marshes	'mɑ:ʃiz	marches	'mɑ:tʃiz
cash	kæʃ	catch	kætʃ
leisure	'leʒə	ledger	'ledʒə
mats	mæts	match	mætʃ
beats	bi:ts	beach	bi:tʃ
parts	pɑ:ts	parch	pɑ:tʃ

>			æ	ʌ	ɑ:
cat	cut	cart	kæt	kʌt	kɑ:t
cap	cup	carp	kæp	kʌp	kɑ:p
bad	bud	bard	bæd	bʌd	bɑ:d
badge	budge	barge	bædʒ	bʌdʒ	bɑ:dʒ
match	much	march	mætʃ	mʌtʃ	mɑ:tʃ
ban	bun	barn	bæn	bʌn	bɑ:n
ham	hum	harm	hæm	hʌm	hɑ:m

		ʌ	ɔ
dug	dog	dʌg	dɔg
nut	not	nʌt	nɔt
shut	shot	ʃʌt	ʃɔt
luck	lock	lʌk	lɔk
cuff	cough	kʌf	kɔf
one, won	want	wʌn	wɔnt
done	don	dʌn	dɔn
gun	gone	gʌn	gɔn
colour	collar	'kʌlə	'kɔlə
worry	sorry	'wʌri	'sɔri
wonder	wander	'wʌndə	'wɔndə
monkey	donkey	'mʌŋki	'dɔŋki
dull	doll	dʌl	dɔl

		ə:	ɔ:
work	walk	wə:k	wɔ:k
world	worn, warn	wə:ld	wɔ:n
worth	sworn	wə:θ	swɔ:n
worm	warm	wə:m	wɔ:m
word	ward	wə:d	wɔ:d
burn	born, borne	bə:n	bɔ:n
turn	torn	tə:n	tɔ:n
Turk	talk	tə:k	tɔ:k
curt	court, caught	kə:t	kɔ:t

		ɔː	ou
saw	so, sew	sɔː	sou
law	low	lɔː	lou
Shaw	show	ʃɔː	ʃou
paws	pose	pɔːz	pouz
claws	close	klɔːz	klouz
drawn	drone	drɔːn	droun
gnawing	knowing	ˈnɔːiŋ	ˈnouiŋ
cause	cosy	kɔːz	ˈkouzi
caught	coat	kɔːt	kout
bought	boat	bɔːt	bout
ought	oats	ɔːt	outs
broad	road	brɔːd	roud
haul	hole, whole	hɔːl	houl
tall	toll	tɔːl	toul
ball	bowl	bɔːl	boul
bald	bold	bɔːld	bould
Paul	Pole, poll	pɔːl	poul
paltry	poultry	ˈpɔːltri	ˈpoultri

Notice the various pronunciation of these words:

bow (knot, weapon or musical instrument): bou
(other senses): bau

row (noise, dispute): rau
(other senses): rou

sow (to plant seed): sou
(female pig): sau

(x) Dark l may affect the quality of a preceding vowel, by causing it to be articulated further back or lower in the mouth. But you must not allow the quality of the vowel to be changed beyond recognition. Say these

words, taking care not to use a clear l:

meal mi:l, *field* fi:ld, *bill* bil, *milk* milk, *well* wel, *help* help, *valve* vælv, *balcony* 'bælkəni, *Charles* tʃɑ:lz, *involve* in'vɔlv, *pull* pul, *pool* pu:l, *bulb* bʌlb, *culture* 'kʌltʃə, *tale* teil, *failed* feild, *railway* 'reilwei, *trial* 'traiəl, *while* wail, *mild* maild, *foul* faul, *growled* grauld, *towel* 'tauəl, *oil* ɔil, *boiled* bɔild, *spoilt* spɔilt, *royal* 'rɔiəl.

Take special care to distinguish ə: ɔ: ou before dark l, as they are more likely to be confused in this position:

			ə:l	ɔ:l	oul
pearl	pall	pole	pə:l	pɔ:l	poul
girl	gall	goal	gə:l	gɔ:l	goul
curl	call	coal	kə:l	kɔ:l	koul
furl	fall	foal	fə:l	fɔ:l	foul
Searle	Saul	soul, sole	sə:l	sɔ:l	soul
world	walled	wold	wə:ld	wɔ:ld	would
—	malt	moult	—	mɔ:lt	moult

(xi) When a vowel is followed by two consonant sounds, of which the first is a nasal, you must not allow the vowel to become nasalised. English does not use nasalised vowels. In such words as *answer* and *only* we must hear a full, clear vowel followed by a full, clear n, thus:

'ɑ:nsə *not* 'ɑ̃:sə
'ounli *not* 'oũli

Many students find this difficult, and they should practise as follows. Say the word in three separate parts, firmly and slowly, holding on to each part for one full second:

ɑ: —— n —— sə
ou —— n —— li

Pause between each part; and while you say the first part, dismiss from your mind all idea of what is to follow. If you are thinking in advance about the n, this will cause you to nasalise the vowel, which is the mistake you must learn to avoid. After this, put the parts together, but still exaggerating their length and taking great care not to change the quality of the first vowel. Then say the word at normal speed, still taking the same care.

If such a vowel is preceded by w, it is still more important to take care:

won't wou ——n——t
want wɔ ——n——t
once wʌ ——n——s

Even when the nasal is not followed by another consonant, there is still a danger of too much nasalisation of the vowel. Say these words carefully with the above remarks in mind:

meaning 'mi:niŋ, *hint* hint, *finger* 'fiŋgə, *meant* ment, *sense* sens, *Henry* 'henri, *pencil* 'pensl, *enrol* in'roul, *angry* 'æŋgri, *anthem* 'ænθəm, *dance* da:ns, *aunt* a:nt, *can't* ka:nt, *fond* fɔnd, *responsible* ri'spɔnsibl, *confidence* 'kɔnfidəns, *dawn* dɔ:n, *laundry* 'lɔ:ndri, *moon* mu:n, *spoon* spu:n, *wounded* 'wu:ndid, *one* wʌn, *uncle* 'ʌŋkl, *month* mʌnθ, *unless* ən'les, *unlike* ʌn'laik, *hungry* 'hʌŋgri, *change* tʃeindʒ, *exchange* iks'tʃeindʒ, *danger* 'deindʒə, *ancient* 'einʃənt, *campaign* kæm'pein, *moment* 'moumənt, *comb* koum, *own* oun, *home* houm, *don't* dount, *mind* maind, *time* taim, *final* 'fainl, *ninth* nainθ, *county* 'kaunti, *round* raund, *ounce* auns, *council* 'kaunsl, *ointment* 'ɔintmənt, *coin* kɔin.

(xii) When uː is written as *u*, *ue*, *ui*, *eau*, *eu* or *ew*, j is generally inserted before it, except after r, ʃ, tʃ, dʒ, or a consonant + l. Ex: *unit* 'juːnit, *eugenics* juː'dʒeniks, *human* 'hjuːmən, *value* 'væljuː, *nuisance* 'njuːsəns, *beauty* 'bjuːti, *neutral* 'njuːtrəl, *rule* ruːl, *true* truː, *parachute* 'pærəʃuːt, *juice* dʒuːs, *blew* bluː.

When uː follows s, initial l, or l preceded by an unstressed vowel, the j is sometimes omitted. Ex: *suitable* 'sjuːtəbl or 'suːtəbl, *superior* sjuː'piəriə or suː'piəriə, *Lewis* 'ljuːis or 'luːis, *illusion* i'ljuːʒn or i'luːʒn.

3

Semivowels

The semivowels j and w are brief, gliding sounds. The tongue starts from the position of i: and u: respectively, and moves rapidly away to the following sound. Thus, they resemble vowels in their quality, but are more like consonants in their shortness. The lips are spread for j, and closely rounded for w. Care should be taken not to form w with flattened or spread lips: they must be pushed forward and at the same time energetically rounded. Greek speakers often replace w by a velar fricative consonant (as in the Greek *ghonia*). Their fault is to raise the back of the tongue too high and not to round the lips closely enough. If necessary, practise the words *why*, *what* with the vowel u:, and then shorten this sound by stages until the semivowel glide is reached:

1st stage	u: — ai	u: — ɔt
2nd stage	u:ai	u:ɔt
3rd stage	ŭai	ŭɔt
4th stage	wai	wɔt

Words for practice: *yield* ji:ld, *yes* jes, *yard* jɑ:d, *union* 'ju:njən, *tune* tju:n, *beauty* 'bju:ti, *view* vju:, *failure* 'feiljə, *human* 'hju:mən, *Matthew* 'mæθju:, *lawyer* 'lɔ:jə, *wheel* wi:l, *William* 'wiljəm, *west* west, *one* wʌn, *wood* wud, *wound* wu:nd, *equal* 'i:kwəl, *swan* swɔn, *queen* kwi:n, *language* 'læŋgwidʒ.

4

Plosive Consonants

There are three sets of plosive consonants in English: b p, d t, g k.

b and p are made with the lips pressed together.

d and t are made with the tip of the tongue pressed against the ridge of the gum just behind the upper teeth.

g and k are made with the back of the tongue pressed against the soft palate.

When p t k occur before a stressed vowel, a slight puff of breath (called *aspiration*) is heard immediately after the release of the consonant. Thus, *pen tea cat* sound like phen thi: khæt. But this h is only a weak sound—not as strong, for example, as the puff of breath which may occur in a similar position in the Indian languages, or in German. Before unstressed vowels the aspiration is weaker still; and in syllables beginning with s it usually does not occur at all. Thus, *spend steam scan* are not sphend sthi:m skhæn, but spend sti:m skæn.

b d g are voiced sounds corresponding to p t k. Notice that English t d are made by pressing the tip of the tongue, *not* right against the upper teeth, but a little further back. This is important because many students make t and d with the more forward (*dental*) position, which does not sound quite right in English. On the other hand, you must avoid curling back the tongue tip

and making a *retroflex* sound. This is a common mistake of Pakistanis and Indians, who are accustomed to using retroflex t d in English loan-words like *ticket, motor, doctor, radio.* Many Indian languages possess both dental t d and retroflex t d as distinctive sounds. English t d lie between these. It may be noted, however, that the articulation of these sounds can be affected by an adjoining sound; so that we may use a forward t in eighth eitθ (because of θ), and a backward t in tree tri: (because of r). Avoid using a very forward (*palatal*) k g before front vowels (a French and Greek mistake) or in final position (a French and Scandinavian mistake). Pronounce *kept, get, back, dog* as kept get bæk dɔg, not kjept gjet bækj dɔgj.

Incomplete plosion. When two plosives occur together in the same word or two adjoining words, there is no audible release (or *plosion*) of the first sound. In *soup plate* 'su:p pleit the lips are not parted at all between the first and second p. In *sit down* 'sit 'daun the tongue-tip is not removed from the teeth ridge between t and d. In *background* 'bækgraund the back of the tongue is not removed from the soft palate between k and g. Practise these: *lamp post* 'læmp poust, *not true* 'nɔt 'tru:, *book-keeping* 'bukki:piŋ, *bad dream* 'bæd 'dri:m, *big game* 'big 'geim, *hip-bone* 'hipboun, *dog-collar* 'dɔgkɔlə.

A similar effect is produced when the two adjacent plosives have different points of articulation. Thus, in *goodbye* 'gud'bai the lips are placed in closed position for b while the tongue-tip is still held in the position of d. In *what kind?* 'wɔt 'kaind the tongue is adjusted from the position of t to that of k by a rolling movement, without breaking contact with the roof of the mouth. In *big town* 'big 'taun a similar adjustment takes place in the reverse direction from g to t. In all the examples

quoted, the pressure of air within the mouth is released only after the second of the two plosives. No intervening noise of h or ə should be heard between the two, although this fault is very common. Now practise these: *captain* 'kæptin, *keep down* 'ki:p 'daun, *obtain* əb'tein, *abdicate* 'æbdikeit, *football* 'futbɔ:l, *outcome* 'autkʌm, *that girl* 'ðæt 'gə:l, *picked* pikt, *backbone* 'bækboun, *begged* begd, *flagpole* 'flægpoul.

5

Nasal Consonants

There are three nasal consonants in English: m n ŋ, as in *sum* sʌm, *sun* sʌn, *sung* sʌŋ.

m has the same lip position as b and p.

n has the same tongue position as d and t.

ŋ has the same tongue position as g and k.

But for nasals the soft palate remains lowered to allow the breath to pass out through the nose, whereas for plosives the soft palate is raised and the nose passage is closed.

If you find ŋ difficult to make, practise like this. Open your mouth, feel your tongue in position for g, and say the word *go*. Then return to the g position, and instead of proceeding from g to ou, simply relax the soft palate to allow your breath to escape through the nose, without moving your tongue, but keeping up the voice. In doing this you will have uttered gŋ. Now go on to practise ŋ alone, making sure that it has the same tongue position as g in *go*. It is a common mistake to use a palatal nasal (that is, the sound of *gn* in French and Italian or *ñ* in Spanish), especially in the ending *-ing*. Avoid this by pressing the tongue tip against your lower teeth and opening your mouth wide. (Remember that final *gn* is n as in *sign* sain, and medial *-gn-* is gn as in *signal* 'signəl.) Another common mistake is to use n instead of ŋ.

ŋ represents the letters *ng* at the end of a word, and in inflected forms of verbs and nouns: *young* jʌŋ, *song* sɔŋ, *songs* sɔŋz, *sing* siŋ, *singer* 'siŋə, *singing* 'siŋiŋ, *banged* bæŋd. ŋ may also be followed by certain other suffixes, as in *kingdom* 'kiŋdəm, *Birmingham* 'bə:miŋəm, *Langley* 'læŋli. Otherwise ŋ is only found in combination with g or k, as in *younger* 'jʌŋgə, *longest* 'lɔŋgist, *finger* 'fiŋgə, *angle* 'æŋgl, *drink* driŋk, *uncle* 'ʌŋkl, *anchor* 'æŋkə, *conquer* 'kɔŋkə. The ending *-nge* is pronounced ndʒ, which is preserved in derivatives of such words: *strange* streindʒ, *strangest* 'streindʒist, *sponge* spʌndʒ, *sponger* 'spʌndʒə.

In words beginning with one of the prefixes *in-*, *en-*, *un-*, *con-*, you may use either n or ŋ if the next sound is k or g.

include	in'klu:d	*or*	iŋ'klu:d
inquire	in'kwaiə	*or*	iŋ'kwaiə
engrave	in'greiv	*or*	iŋ'greiv
unkind	'ʌn'kaind	*or*	'ʌŋ'kaind
uncooked	'ʌn'kukt	*or*	'ʌŋ'kukt
concussion	kən'kʌʃn	*or*	kəŋ'kʌʃn
congratulate	kən'grætʃuleit	*or*	kəŋ'grætʃuleit

When *con-* is stressed, use ŋ before k or g, as in *congress* 'kɔŋgres, *concord* 'kɔŋkɔ:d, *concrete* 'kɔŋkri:t, *incongruous* in'kɔŋgruəs or iŋ'kɔŋgruəs.

Nasal plosion. When b or p is followed by m, the two lips must not come apart between the plosive and the m. They are held together throughout both sounds, just as they are when two labial plosives come together. In the same way, if d or t is followed by n, the tongue tip must not lose contact with the roof of the mouth before the n is sounded. Practise these: *submit* səb'mit,

crabmeat 'kræbmi:t, *help me* 'help mi, *top marks* 'tɔp 'mɑ:ks, *didnt* 'didnt, *good news* 'gud 'nju:z, *written* 'ritn, *not now* 'nɔt 'nau. In all these examples the pressure of air in the mouth is released through the nose by lowering the soft palate. Apart from this lowering there is no other movement in the mouth. It is a good exercise to practise bm and pm without moving the lips, and dn and tn without moving the tip of the tongue.

This nasal release of a plosive is also made in any other group of plosive followed by nasal, and no intervening noise of h or ə should be heard between the two. Practise these: *halfpenny* 'heipni, *abnormal* æb'nɔ:məl, *that man* 'ðæt 'mæn, *admit* əd'mit, *darkness* 'dɑ:knis, *signal* 'signəl, *blackmail* 'blækmeil, *dogma* 'dɔgmə.

Note: in words where *un-* or *-ness* adjoins another nasal, the double nasal sound is preserved: *unnatural* 'ʌn'nætʃrəl, *unknown* 'ʌn'noun, *plainness* 'pleinnis.

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6

Lateral Consonants

There are two distinct kinds of l in English: *clear l* (similiar to the l of French and Italian), and *dark l* (similar to the Russian *hard l*). The clear sound is used before vowels and j, as in *let* let, *last* la:st, *look* luk, *value* 'vælju:. The dark sound is used before consonants and w, and finally: *build* bild, *always* 'ɔ:lweiz, *tell* tel.

Those who find the distinction difficult to master should practise like this. Every l is made by pressing the tip of the tongue against the teeth ridge, just behind the upper teeth. Keeping your tongue tip firmly in this position, try to say the vowel i:. This will produce a clear sound. Then, still keeping your tongue tip in the same place, try to say the vowel ɔ:. This will produce a dark sound. Bear in mind that clear l reflects the quality of i: while dark l reflects the quality of ɔ:. Now take a good breath, start a firmly sustained ɔ: and as you say it, slowly raise the tip of your tongue to touch the teeth ridge, taking care to keep the quality of ɔ: unchanged, and not to let it become like i:. What you have said is a slow pronunciation of the word *all*. Repeat this, and other words such as *full*, *well*, *mill*, until you have firm control of the dark l. Next, compare *all* ɔ:l with *law* lɔ: and *feel* fi:l with *leaf* li:f. Contrast the dark l of *feel* and *veal* with the clear l of German *viel*

and French *ville*, or with words in other languages where a clear l occurs finally.

English dark l is not as 'dark' as that of Portuguese. Speakers of Portuguese should try to reduce this dark effect by making the sound shorter in English, and giving it the quality of u in *full* rather than ɔ: in *all*. The sounds l and r may be confused by Japanese speakers, who should concentrate on the different positions of the tongue tip, and practise pairs of words like: *light* lait, *right* rait; *lift* lift, *rift* rift; *belly* 'beli, *berry* 'beri; *palace* 'pælis, *Paris* 'pæris.

Remember that l at the end of a word changes from dark to clear as soon as it is followed by another word, or an inflexion, which begins with a vowel or j. Compare these:

dark		*clear*	
well dressed	'wel 'drest	well informed	'wel in'fɔ:md
all gone	'ɔ:l gɔn	all over	'ɔ:l 'ouvə
will she?	'wil ʃi:?	will it?	'wil it?
will they?	'wil ðei?	will you?	'wil ju:?
boil	bɔil	boiling	'bɔiliŋ
fail	feil	failure	'feiljə
special	'speʃl	specially	'speʃli
official	ə'fiʃl	officially	ə'fiʃəli

Other words for practising: (clear l) *lead* li:d, *laugh* la:f, *love* lʌv, *alive* ə'laiv, *plan* plæn, *clock* klɔk, *blue* blu:, *yellow* 'jelou, *brilliant* 'briljənt, *million* 'miljən. (Dark l) *sell* sel, *tail* teil, *school* sku:l, *Charles* tʃa:lz, *world* wə:ld, *miles* mailz, *apple* 'æpl, *bicycle* 'baisikl, *puzzle* 'pʌzl, *whistle* 'wisl, *usual* 'ju:ʒl.

Lateral plosion. When d or t is followed by l, the tip of the tongue must not completely lose contact with the roof of the mouth before the l is sounded. In proceeding

from d or t to l the breath is released from the mouth *laterally*, that is to say at the sides of the tongue (whose tip remains pressed against the upper teeth-ridge). No intervening vowel should be heard between the plosive and the lateral. This applies equally to clear and dark l. Practise these: *badly* 'bædli, *endless* 'endlis, *atlas* 'ætləs, *butler* 'bʌtlə, *good luck* 'gud 'lʌk, *at last* ət'lɑ:st, *middle* 'midl, *idle* 'aidl, *bottled* 'bɔtld, *settles* 'setlz.

Sometimes a group of several consonants is found in which lateral plosion, nasal plosion or incomplete plosion occur in sequence. For example:

a long-handled knife ə'lɔŋhændld 'naif
a dismantled tower ədis'mæntld 'tauə

Notice that the tip of the tongue remains pressed against the teeth-ridge throughout five consonants: ndldn in the first phrase, and ntldt in the second phrase.

Note on length. Final lateral and nasal consonants in final stressed syllables are rather long, especially after a short vowel, as in *him one song well.* (Other consonants should be kept short in this position. See p. 3.)

7

R Sounds

The typical English r is made neither by vibrating the tongue-tip, nor at the back of the mouth with the uvula (as in French and German). It is a smooth gliding sound like j and w, and in standard southern English it is always followed by a vowel. The tip of the tongue is slightly curled up towards the palate, without actually touching it, and is then brought smartly down with the onset of the vowel. When the tongue is raised, the central part is slightly hollow, and the side edges of it may touch the back teeth. The raising can be slow and deliberate, but the downward stroke is swift.

You can do this better if you practise before a mirror. Open your mouth fairly wide (as for the vowel ɑ:), and do not move your lips. Then raise the tongue slowly as described, pause, and strike sharply downward. Imagine that the underneath part of your tongue-tip is the head of a hammer, with which you are tapping a nail at the bottom of your mouth, behind the lower teeth. Do this several times, taking care not to move your jaw and lips, but simply watching and feeling the independent movement of the tongue, until you have it well under control. Above all, do not let the tongue vibrate against the roof of the mouth when you raise it. Now (still using the mirror) say slowly:

ɑ:—rɑ:—rɑ:—rɑ:

Follow this with əː—rəː and ai—rai and so on, using all the other vowels and diphthongs in turn.

When r occurs initially, or between vowels, it has no sound of friction. But when it follows a plosive consonant there may be noticeable friction. r after t is very similar to ʃ, and r after d is very similar to ʒ. Notice the resemblance between these pairs of words:

cheese	tʃiːz	trees	triːz
chew	tʃuː	true	truː
chain	tʃein	train	trein
jug	dʒʌg	drug	drʌg
jest	dʒest	dressed	drest
Jane	dʒein	drain	drein

It is advisable for the learner to approach r as a new kind of sound, dissociated from the letter *r*, and from his idea of r-sounds in general. Doing this may help him to avoid substituting his own native r. This sound will probably be either a uvular r (made with the back of the tongue), or a vibration of the tongue-tip against the upper teeth-ridge. The uvular r seems very much out of place in English, and should be avoided. On the other hand, the second kind or r (tongue-tip vibration) may be used by those who cannot produce any other. It is indeed normal in some kinds of English pronunciation (for example, in Scotland), but is not the typical r of standard southern English (although, even here, it is often used between two vowels and after θ, ex: *sorry* 'sɔri, *through* θruː).

In many kinds of English speech r is pronounced in all positions, wherever there is an *r* in the spelling. This is so, for example, in the west of England, as well as in Scottish, Irish and American speech. But do not forget that, in southern English, r is pronounced only if a vowel

immediately follows, irrespective of the letter *r* in the spelling. Thus *r* and *re* finally, or *r* before a consonant, are silent:

far	fɑ:	there	ðɛə
card	kɑ:d	forty	'fɔ:ti

But r will be pronounced at the end of a word in order to link it to a following word which begins with a vowel:

far away	'fɑ:r‿ə'wei
there it is	'ðɛər‿it 'iz
father and mother	'fɑ:ðər‿ən 'mʌðə
Tower of London	'tauər‿əv 'lʌndən

Those who aim at making the southern English r correctly must take care not to substitute lip-movement for tongue-movement. Keep the lips still, and do not protrude them. Swedish and Norwegian students should avoid making retroflex consonants in words containing the letters *rt, rd, rs, rn, rl.* Ex: *heart* hɑ:t, *third* θə:d, *person* 'pə:sn, *turn* tə:n, *world* wə:ld. Let them dismiss the letter *r* from their minds, and see that, in t d s n l, the tip of the tongue remains in a forward position near the upper teeth.

Words for practice: *dream* dri:m, *dressed* drest, *drop* drɔp, *drove* drouv, *Andrew* 'ændru:, *address* ə'dres, *hindrance* 'hindrəns, *laundry* 'lɔ:ndri, *tree* tri:, *tram* træm, *true* tru:, *string* striŋ, *strand* strænd, *straw* strɔ:, *extra* 'ekstrə, *ministry* 'ministri, *instruct* in'strʌkt, *Australia* ɔs'treiliə, *raft* rɑ:ft, *rush* rʌʃ, *reap* ri:p, *roof* ru:f, *marry* 'mæri, *merry* 'meri, *Mary* 'mɛəri, *area* 'ɛəriə, *fury* 'fjuəri, *cross* krɔs, *grow* grou, *bright* brait, *pray* prei, *fry* frai, *shrub* ʃrʌb, *three* θri:, *repertory* 'repətəri, *rhetorical* ri'tɔrikl, *recreation* rekri'eiʃn, *literary* 'litərəri.

8

Fricative Consonants

The sounds f θ s and v ð z resemble each other, and must be carefully distinguished. It is not particularly difficult to say them separately; but they may give great difficulty when they occur together in groups, or close to one another. And since this happens very often, the correct articulation of such groups is one of the chief difficulties for foreign students of English.

First, see that you can clearly distinguish the sounds from each other, testing yourself with the following:

fin	fin	fought	fɔ:t
thin	θin	thought	θɔ:t
sin	sin	sought	sɔ:t
leaf	li:f	clove	klouv
Leith	li:θ	clothe	klouð
lease	li:s	close	klouz

Next, do an exercise for putting the sounds together:

s — θ — s — θ — s — θ

It is most important to observe the following instructions: (i) take a deep breath, (ii) control the outflow of breath so that it is firm and even, (iii) give each sound one second's duration, (iv) make a clean transition from one sound to the next, without any blurring. At first you

had better make a slight break between the sounds. When you feel sufficiently in control of your tongue, then join them together; and this is the crucial point, for all depends on small but nimble adjustments of the tip of your tongue.

Repeat the exercise with voiced sounds:

z — ð — z — ð — z — ð

This is more difficult because it takes up the breath more quickly. Control the outflow still more firmly, and take care that the sounds are evenly, not spasmodically, voiced.

Practise other combinations in a similar way:

f — θ	s — ð	f — ð	f — s	f — z
v — ð	z — θ	v — θ	v — z	v — s

These exercises are of the greatest importance, and should be carried out with patience and persistence. Until you can do them properly, you will not be able to pronounce such everyday phrases as these:

who's that?	'hu: z 'ðæt
whose is this?	'hu:z iz 'ðis
is there?	'iz ðə
was there?	'wɔz ðə
has there?	'hæz ðə
is this it?	iz 'ðis it
what's this?	'wɔt s 'ðis
what's the time?	'wɔt s ðə 'taim
it's this one	it s 'ðis wʌn
that's the one	'ðæt s ðə 'wʌn
is that the one?	iz 'ðæt ðə wʌn
I think this is it	ai 'θiŋk 'ðis iz it
is the other one there?	iz ði 'ʌðə wʌn ðɛə

there's another thing	ðə z ə'nʌðə θiŋ
what on earth's this?	wɔt ɔn 'ə:θ s 'ðis
as though	əz 'ðou

S AND Z

In dealing with s and z the main problem is the pronunciation of the letter *s*. Here are some general rules.

(i) Initial *s* is s.

(ii) Final *s* (when not silent) after *a i o u* is s, ex: *canvas* 'kænvəs, *this* ðis, *thermos* 'θə:mɔs, *bus* bʌs, *curious* 'kjuəriəs. Exceptions: *is*, *was*, *has*, *his*, *as*, *missis*, and some inflections of nouns and verbs (see p. 70), which have z.

(iii) *ss* is s except in the following, where it is z, *possess* pə'zes, *dessert* di'zə:t, *dissolve* di'zɔlv, *scissors* 'sizəz.

(iv) Initial *dis-* and *mis-* have s, ex: *disappear* disə'piə, *disorder* dis'ɔ:də, *disown* dis'oun, *dismiss* dis'mis, *disgrace* dis'greis, *misbehave* misbi'heiv, *misuse* mis'ju:z, *misunderstand* misʌndə'stænd. Exceptions: *disease* di'zi:z, *disaster* di'zɑ:stə, *dismal* 'dizməl, *misery* 'mizəri, *miser* 'maizə.

(v) Initial *res-* and *pres-* have z when a vowel follows, ex: *resemble* ri'zembl, *result* ri'zʌlt, *preserve* pri'zə:v, *present* 'preznt. Exceptions: *research* ri'sə:tʃ, *resource* ri'sɔ:s, *presage* 'presidʒ, and words beginning with the prefix *re-* denoting repetition, ex: *resale* 'ri:'seil.

(vi) In the groups *-rs-*, *-ls-*, *-ns-* the *s* is almost always s. Ex: *horse* hɔ:s, *person* 'pə:sn, *corset* 'kɔ:sit, *forsake* fə'seik, *persist* pə'sist, *persuade* pə'sweid, *conversation* kɔnvə'seiʃn, *also* 'ɔ:lsou, *else* els, *falsity* 'fɔ:lsiti, *consider* kən'sidə, *insert* in'sə:t, *expensive* iks'pensiv, *answer* 'ɑ:nsə, *consul* 'kɔnsl.

(vii) The following verbs with z have a corresponding noun or adjective with s.

	verb	noun or adj.
house	hauz	haus
use	ju:z	ju:s
abuse	ə'bju:z	ə'bju:s
diffuse	di'fju:z	di'fju:s
refuse	ri'fju:z	'refju:s
close	klouz	klous

(viii) In most words the ending *-se* after a vowel is z, ex: *nose* nouz, *lose* lu:z, *phrase* freiz. Commonest exceptions: *base* beis, *case* keis, *cease* si:s, *dose* dous, *increase* iŋ'kri:s, *release* ri'li:s, *purchase* 'pə:tʃəs, *purpose* 'pə:pəs, *mouse* maus, *obtuse* əb'tju:s, *promise* 'prɔmis, *premise* 'premis, *precise* pri'sais, *concise* kən'sais, and all words in *-oose* except *choose* tʃu:z. Also the words in the last column above.

(ix) In the following Greek words the medial *s* is s, *basis* 'beisis, *crisis* 'kraisis, *oasis* ou'eisis, *thesis* 'θi:sis, *Genesis* 'dʒenisis, *analysis* ə'nælisis, *neurosis* njuə'rousis etc.

(x) The prefix *ex-* is pronounced with gz if it is followed by a stressed syllable beginning with a vowel letter or silent *h*, ex: *exam* ig'zæm, *example* ig'zɑ:mpl, *exaggerate* ig'zædʒəreit, *exhibit* ig'zibit, *exhaust* ig'zɔ:st. In other cases *x* is ks, ex: *exercise* 'eksəsaiz, *excited* ik'saitid, *except* ik'sept, *exhibition* eksi'biʃn.

f AND v

In f and v the lower lip is pressed against the edge of the upper teeth, and there is a clear sound of friction. Avoid the mistake of using the two lips (instead of lip and teeth), or of holding the lower lip so loosely that

seeds	si:dz	siege	si:dʒ
fords	fɔ:dz	forge	fɔ:dʒ
heads	hedz	hedge	hedʒ
builds	bildz	bilge	bildʒ
batch	bætʃ	badge	bædʒ
larch	lɑ:tʃ	large	lɑ:dʒ
etching	'etʃiŋ	edging	'edʒiŋ
wince	wints	winch	wintʃ
hints	hints	hinge	hindʒ
lunch	lʌntʃ	lunge	lʌndʒ
French	frentʃ	friends	frendz
fixture	'fikstʃə	exchange	iks'tʃeindʒ
gesture	'dʒestʃə	question	'kwestʃən

DOUBLE tʃ AND dʒ

When a double tʃ or dʒ occurs at word junctions, the whole complex sound must be fully articulated twice over. It is wrong to double the first element only, making ttʃ or ddʒ. Examples:

each child	'i:tʃ 'tʃaild	*not*	'i:t 'tʃaild
Dutch cheese	'dʌtʃ 'tʃi:z	*not*	'dʌt 'tʃi:z
French chalk	'frentʃ 'tʃɔ:k	*not*	'frent 'tʃɔ:k
orange juice	'ɔrindʒ dʒu:s	*not*	'ɔrind dʒu:s
a large jug	ə'lɑ:dʒ 'dʒʌg	*not*	ə'lɑ:d 'dʒʌg
a huge joke	ə'hju:dʒ 'dʒouk	*not*	ə'hju:d 'dʒouk
fetch John	'fetʃ 'dʒɔn	*not*	'fet 'dʒɔn
village church	'vilidʒ 'tʃə:tʃ	*not*	'vilid 'tʃə:tʃ

THE h SOUND

h is a very gentle sound in English. The noise comes from the larynx, and is simply the sound of breath passing through the open mouth. Speakers of Spanish

and Greek usually replace this by a stronger, velar fricative consonant (as in Spanish *majo* or Greek *chora*). Or if h is followed by i or e, some students will replace it by a palatal fricative (as in Greek *ochi* or German *ich*). Those who make this type of mistake should remind themselves of the correct sound by opening their mouths and breathing out, audibly but gently.

Many other people fail to articulate h at all. Or they may introduce it wrongly in places where it does not exist. One method of achieving h is to whisper the vowel which follows it in any given word. That is to say, the h of *heart* haːt is simply a whispered aː, and the h of *head* is a whispered e. Careful practice with single words and short phrases is desirable. Do not forget that initial h is dropped in the weak forms of some common words (see p. 38). Initial *h* is silent in *hour* 'auə, *honour* 'ɔnə, *honest* 'ɔnist, *heir* ɛə.

Words for practice: *heat* hiːt, *hill* hil, *hat* hæt, *who* huː, *hard* haːd, *hot* hɔt, *heard* həːd, *huge* hjuːdʒ, *human* 'hjuːmən, *perhaps* pə'hæps, *behave* bi'heiv, *anyhow* 'enihau, *inhabit* in'hæbit, *neighbourhood* 'neibəhud, *go home* 'gou 'houm, *is it here?* 'izit 'hiə? *in the house* inðə'haus, *on holiday* ɔn'hɔlədi, *half-an-hour* 'haːf ə'nauə, *I shall have to have it* aiʃl'hæv tə'hævit.

DIFFICULT GROUPS OF SOUNDS

Any sequence of sounds which gives difficulty should be rearranged, or broken up, in practice. Examples:

George the Sixth's throne

'dʒɔːdʒ ðə 'siksθs 'θroun
'dʒɔːdʒ — ðə'siks — θ — s — 'θroun

there was a variety of opinions

ðə wəz ə və'raiəti əv ə'pinjənz
ðə — wə — zə — və — 'raiəti — əvə — 'pinjənz

what an extraordinary notion

'wɔt ən iks'trɔ:dnri 'nouʃn
'wɔtə — niks — 'trɔ:dn — ri'nouʃn

he's gone on the Stock Exchange

hi: z 'gɔn ɔn ðə 'stɔk ikstʃeindʒ
hi:z — 'gɔnɔn — ðə'stɔkiks — tʃeindʒ

I should have thought he had

ai ʃd əv 'θɔ:t i: 'hæd
aiʃ — dəv — 'θɔ:ti: — 'hæd

we should have had to have the whole thing overhauled

wi: ʃd əv 'hæd tə 'hæv ðə 'houl 'θiŋ 'ouvə'hɔ:ld
wi:ʃ — dəv — 'hæd — tə'hæv — ðə'houl — 'θiŋ — 'ouvə — 'hɔ:ld

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9

Weakening

In some languages (for example English, Russian, Italian, Greek) there is a well defined stress-accent on one syllable of each word, which makes that syllable stand out in contrast to the unstressed syllables, even in unemphatic speech. When the language is spoken, we notice that it has a *contrastive rhythm*, based on the alternation of strongly and weakly accented syllables. Some other languages (for example French, Hindustani, Japanese), do not have this strong stress-accent within the word. In them the syllables succeed each other with fairly equal force; and we feel an *even rhythm*, based on the smooth flow of syllables without a strong contrast of stress. (Naturally, this does not exclude greater stress being given to a word for the sake of emphasis.)

In languages with an even rhythm, each vowel generally maintains roughly the same quality wherever it occurs. Thus, in French *monotone* and *paragraphe*, the vowel *o* in the first word and *a* in the second word sound about the same each time they occur (mɔnɔtɔn, paragraf). This same stability of vowels is also found in some of the languages with contrastive rhythm. It appears in Italian (*monótono, quaránta*) and Greek (*monótonos, saránda, periménete*). In all those words the vowels *o*, *a* and *e* are more or less constant, no matter whether they are stressed or not. On the other hand, we find that in

Russian the unstressed vowels have a noticeably different quality from the stressed ones:

okolo	'okələ	(near)
komnata	'komnətə	(room)
golova	gəlʌ'va	(head)
karandash	kərʌn'daʃ	(pencil)
menee	'menijə	(less)

In the above words we see that the vowels o, a, e occur only in stressed syllables. In unstressed positions they are weakened to ə, ʌ or i.

This weakening of unstressed syllables is also a feature of English, though it is not absolutely regular as in Russian. We find it in the following:

monotonous	mə'nɔtənəs
banana	bə'nɑ:nə
prevented	pri'ventid
movement	'mu:vmənt
welcome	'welkəm
Plymouth	'pliməθ
estimate (*noun*)	'estimit
comfort	'kʌmfət
common	'kɔmən

In those words we see that the vowel of every unstressed syllable is either ə or i. But we do not find similar weakening in the following:

comment	'kɔment
outcome	'autkʌm
estimate (*verb*)	'estimeit
import	'impɔ:t
coupon	'ku:pɔn

Sometimes the vowels of two related words are in contrast because of different stress positions:

add	æd	addition	ə'diʃn
terror	'terə	terrific	tə'rifik
family	'fæmili	familiar	fə'miljə
relative	'relətiv	relate	ri'leit

Often a weak vowel may disappear altogether:

awf*u*lly	'ɔ:fli
com*f*ortable	'kʌmftəbl
marv*e*llous	'mɑ:vləs
choc*o*late	'tʃɔklət
Marg*a*ret	'mɑ:grit
gen*e*rally	'dʒenrəli

It is very important, for good pronunciation, to observe the weakening of unstressed syllables in English. Many common prefixes and endings (such as *re-*, *be-*, *-ed*, *-ness*, *-age*) are covered by easily remembered rules (see Appendix). But there is no comprehensive rule for all words, so you must make use of a reliable dictionary. Here is a brief list to show the sort of words that need special attention to their weakened syllables:

*a*bout	ə'baut	p*a*rticul*a*r	pə'tikjulə
*a*rrive	ə'raiv	perm*a*n*e*nt	'pə:mənənt
m*a*chine	mə'ʃi:n	v*a*ri*e*ty	və'raiəti
Ar*a*b	'ærəb	breakf*a*st	'brekfəst
mad*a*m	'mædəm	purch*a*se	'pə:tʃis
begg*a*r	'begə	forw*a*rd	'fɔ:wəd
*e*xact	ig'zækt	pal*a*ce	'pælis
s*e*rene	si'ri:n	p*e*rform	pə'fɔ:m
sil*e*nce	'sailəns	tol*e*rate	'tɔləreit
sol*e*mn	'sɔləm	movem*e*nt	'mu:vmənt
cam*e*l	'kæməl	harm*o*ny	'hɑ:məni
c*o*mmit	kə'mit	rec*o*gnise	'rekəgnaiz
p*o*lice	pə'li:s	freed*o*m	'fri:dəm

lem*o*n	'leməŋ	peri*o*d	'piəriəd
f*o*rget	fə'get	comf*o*rt	'kʌmfət
doct*o*r	'dɔktə	Oxf*o*rd	'ɔksfəd
col*u*mn	'kɔləm	ill*u*strate	'iləstreit
murm*ur*	'mə:mə	s*ur*prise	sə'praiz
capt*ai*n	'kæptin	mon*ey*	'mʌni
fam*ou*s	'feiməs	fig*ure*	'figə

Do not assume that every unstressed syllable is weakened. A pronouncing dictionary gives the phonetic transcription of each word, with possible alternatives. You may also find clear guidance on pronunciation (including weakening) in the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary*; but you must take the trouble to study the method of notation which it uses.

STRONG AND WEAK FORMS

What has been said so far refers to single words, pronounced by themselves. But it makes no difference if we put them with others in a sentence: the contrast between stressed and unstressed syllables is not affected, and their pronunciation remains the same.

But now we must deal with a second kind of weakening, which occurs only in continuous speech. You will notice that the words mentioned above are all 'content' words (nouns, adjectives, adverbs, some pronouns, main verbs). This second kind of weakening applies to the 'structural' words, which link the 'content' words and show their grammatical relationships (articles, prepositions, conjunctions, some pronouns, auxiliary verbs). These are not many in number, but they are among the commonest words of the language. Some of these structural words have more than one form of pronunciation. The *strong* form is used when the word is

said in isolation or with emphasis; and a *weak* form is used if it has an unstressed position in the sentence. As structural words are usually unemphatic, the weak forms are used more often than the strong ones. A weak form may vary slightly as it is adjusted to the sounds of the adjoining word. It is a common mistake of foreign students to use strong forms instead of weak ones; and you should take special care to avoid this mistake. Study the following list and go through the examples below it, noting which syllables are stressed and how the unstressed structural words are weakened.

List A

word	strong form	weak forms
the	ðiː	ði (before vowel) ðə (before consonant)
a	ei	ə
an	æn	ən
and	ænd	ən, n
but	bʌt	bət
than	ðæn	ðən
that (not demonstrative)	ðæt	ðət
us	ʌs	əs, s
them	ðem	ðəm
to	tuː	tu (before vowel or finally) tə (before consonant)
saint (before a name)	seint	snt

> *Examples of the use of weak forms:*

the end of the week	ði 'end əv ðə 'wi:k
the question of the hour	ðə 'kwestʃən əv ði 'auə
a day in the country	ə 'dei in ðə 'kʌntri
an easy journey	ən 'i:zi 'dʒə:ni
you and I	'ju: ən 'ai
ten-and-six each	'ten ən 'siks 'i:tʃ
bread-and-butter	'bred n 'bʌtə
but I can't find it	bət ai 'kɑ:nt 'faind it
we need more than that	wi: 'ni:d 'mɔ: ðən 'ðæt
not that it matters	'nɔt ðət it 'mætəz
the light that failed	ðə 'lait ðət 'feild
they took us home	ðei 'tuk əs 'houm
let's have tea	'let s hæv 'ti:
I sent them a note	ai 'sent ðəm ə 'nout
she went to Oxford	ʃi: 'went tu 'ɔksfəd
the school they go to	ðə 'sku:l ðei 'gou tu
give it to John	'giv it tə 'dʒɔn
St. Martin's church	snt 'mɑ:tinz 'tʃə:tʃ

Now look at the next list. These are similar words, but there is an exception to the rule about their weak forms. If any of these words occurs at the end of a phrase or sentence, the *strong* form is used even though the word is unstressed.

List B

word	strong form	weak forms
am	æm	əm, m
is	iz	z, s
are	ɑ: (r)	ə (r)
was	wɔz	wəz
were	wə: (r)	wə (r)

will	wil	əl, l
would	wud	əd, d
shall	ʃæl	ʃl
should	ʃud	ʃəd, ʃd
have	hæv	əv, v
has	hæz	əz, z, s
had	hæd	əd, d
do	du:	du (before vowel) də (before consonant) d (before j)
does	dʌz	dəz
must	mʌst	məst, məs
can	kæn	kən
could	kud	kəd
some (partitive)	sʌm	səm
as	æz	əz
at	æt	ət
from	frɔm	frəm
for	fɔ: (r)	fə (r)
of	ɔv	əv

➢ *Examples of the use of weak forms:*

nor am I	'nɔ:r əm 'ai
I'm ready to start	ai m 'redi tə 'stɑ:t
where's the paper?	'wɛə z ðə 'peipə?
what's the matter?	'wɔt s ðə 'mætə?
when are they coming?	'wen ə ðei 'kʌmiŋ?
our friends are away	auə 'frendz ər ə'wei
one was enough	'wʌn wəz i'nʌf
they were very pleased	ðei wə 'veri 'pli:zd
the lights were out	ðə 'laits wər 'aut
it'll soon be over	it l 'su:n bi: 'ouvə
I hope Phil'll come	ai 'houp 'fil əl 'kʌm

Dad would like it	'dæd əd 'laik it
they'd rather not	ðei d 'rɑ:ðə 'nɔt
I shall take it up	ai ʃl 'teik it 'ʌp
we should prefer not to	wi: ʃəd pri'fə: 'nɔt tu
I should have thought so	ai ʃd əv 'θɔ:t sou
the guests have arrived	ðə 'gests əv ə'raivd
I've just finished	ai v 'dʒʌst 'finiʃt
the glass has gone up	ðə 'glɑ:s əz gɔn 'ʌp
she's gone for a walk	ʃi: z 'gɔn fər ə 'wɔ:k
it's already started	it s ɔ:l'redi 'stɑ:tid
perhaps John would know	'præps 'dʒɔn əd nou
I'd quite forgotten	ai d 'kwait fə'gɔtn
so do all of us	'sou du 'ɔ:l əv əs
where do they go to?	'wɛə də ðei 'gou tu?
how do you like it?	'hau d ju: 'laik it?
what does it mean?	'wɔt dəz it 'mi:n?
I must answer that letter	ai məst 'ɑ:nsə ðæt 'letə
wherever can it be?	wɛər'evə kən it 'bi:?
we could come tomorrow	wi: kəd 'kʌm tə'mɔrou
would you like some more?	'wud ju: laik səm 'mɔ:?
as far as I know	əz 'fɑ:r əz 'ai nou
be at the station at ten	'bi: ət ðə 'steiʃn ət 'ten
it's a letter from Clara	it s ə 'letə frəm 'klɛərə
they sent for the doctor	ðei 'sent fə ðə 'dɔktə
shall we go for a walk?	ʃl wi: 'gou fər ə 'wɔ:k?
as a matter of fact	əz ə 'mætər əv 'fækt

Examples of strong form in unstressed position:

what's it made *of*?	'wɔt s it 'meid ɔv?
where does it come *from*	'wɛə dəz it: 'kʌm frɔm?
won't you have *some*?	'wount ju: 'hæv sʌm?
if he *can*, anyone *can*	if 'hi: kæn, 'eniwʌn kæn

who wants it? I *do*	'hu: 'wɔnts it? 'ai du:
Mary isn't going, but I *am*	'mɛəri iznt 'gouiŋ, bət 'ai æm
if they can't do it, we *must*	if 'ðei kɑ:nt 'du: it, 'wi: mʌst
a much talked *of* book	ə 'mʌtʃ 'tɔ:kt ɔv 'buk
I was called *for* at ten	ai wəz 'kɔ:ld fɔ:r ət 'ten
what an unheard *of* idea	'wɔt ən ʌn'hə:d ɔv ai'diə
we got *some* from the shop	wi: 'gɔt sʌm frəm ðə 'ʃɔp
he was shot *at* by snipers	hi: wəz 'ʃɔt æt bai 'snaipəz

In questions beginning with an auxiliary verb, that verb may be either stressed (strong form) or unstressed (weak form):

are they coming?	'ɑ: ðei 'kʌmiŋ?	*or*
	ə ðei 'kʌmiŋ?	
does it matter?	'dʌz it 'mætə?	*or*
	dəz it 'mætə?	
can I have one?	'kæn ai 'hæv wʌn?	*or*
	kən ai 'hæv wʌn?	

When *have has had* are weakened in initial position, they are pronounced həv həz həd. Do not weaken *is will would* initially even if they are unstressed:

have they seen it?	'hæv ðei 'si:n it?	*or*
	həv ðei 'si:n it?	
has it come?	'hæz it 'kʌm?	*or*
	həz it 'kʌm?	
is it ready?	'iz it 'redi?	*or*
	iz it 'redi?	
would you like to?	'wud ju: 'laik tu?	*or*
	wud ju: 'laik tu?	

In phrases *ending* with an auxiliary verb and pronoun, the verb is not weakened unless the pronoun is stressed:

who are they?	'hu: ə 'ðei?	*or*
	'hu: ɑ: ðei?	*or*
	hu: 'ɑ: ðei?	
where were you?	'wɛə wə 'ju:?	*or*
	'wɛə wə: ju:?	*or*
	wɛə 'wə: ju:?	
so am I	'sou əm 'ai	
why must I?	'wai mʌst ai?	
how can it?	'hau kæn it?	*or*
	hau 'kæn it?	

Notice that final *it* is hardly ever stressed. In 'question tags' the verb is stressed and the pronoun unstressed:

they aren't ready, are they?	ðei 'ɑ:nt 'redi, 'ɑ: ðei?
they're ready, aren't they?	ðɛə 'redi, 'ɑ:nt ðei?
you weren't there, were you?	ju: 'wə:nt 'ðɛə, 'wə: ju:?
you were there, weren't you?	ju: wə 'ðɛə, 'wə:nt ju:?
I'm not late, am I?	ai m 'nɔt 'leit, 'æm ai?
I'm late, aren't I?	ai m 'leit, 'ɑ:nt ai?

Since the weak forms of *is has* and *had would* may be the same, remember that its can mean either *it is* or *it has*, and ðeid can mean either *they had* or *they would*.

OTHER WEAK FORMS

(i) *Not.* The strong form is nɔt. The weak form nt is used after an unweakened auxiliary verb. If the auxiliary verb is weakened, then the negative is stressed and keeps its strong form.

I am not			ai m 'nɔt
it is not	it 'iznt	*or*	it s 'nɔt
they are not	ðei 'ɑ:nt	*or*	ðei ə 'nɔt
I was not	ai 'wɔznt	*or*	ai wəz 'nɔt
we were not	wi: 'wə:nt	*or*	wi: wə 'nɔt
they would not	ðei 'wudnt	*or*	ðei d 'nɔt
I should not	ai 'ʃudnt	*or*	ai ʃəd 'nɔt
you have not	ju 'hævnt	*or*	ju v 'nɔt
it has not	it 'hæznt	*or*	it s 'nɔt
they had not	ðei 'hædnt	*or*	ðei d 'nɔt
he does not	hi: 'dʌznt	*or*	hi: dəz 'nɔt
we must not	wi: 'mʌsnt	*or*	wi: məs 'nɔt
it could not	it 'kudnt	*or*	it kəd 'nɔt

The forms in the second column above are more often used conversationally than those in the third column. To make these phrases into questions, change the position of the pronoun:

is it not?	= isn't it?	'iznt it?	
are they not?	= aren't they?	'ɑ:nt ðei?	*etc.*

Notice these special forms:

am I not?	= aren't I?	'ɑ:nt ai?
will not	= won't	wount
shall not	= shan't	ʃɑ:nt
do not	= don't	dount
can not	= can't	kɑ:nt
we are	= we're	wiə(r)
you are	= you're	juə(r), jɔ:(r)
they are	= they're	ðɛə(r)

(ii) *There* (indefinite adverb). The strong form is ðɛə(r). But in sentences the word is always unstressed,

and is generally weakened to ðə(r). The accompanying auxiliary verb may be weak or strong.

I think there's one here	ai 'θiŋk ðə z wʌn 'hiə
I think there is one	ai 'θiŋk ðər 'iz wʌn
there isn't much time	ðər 'iznt 'mʌtʃ 'taim
how much is there left?	'hau mʌtʃ iz ðə 'left?
why isn't there an answer?	'wai iznt ðər ən 'ɑ:nsə?
there are very few	ðər ə 'veri 'fju:
I hope there are some	ai 'houp ðər 'ɑ: sʌm
there aren't many left	ðər 'ɑ:nt meni 'left
how many are there left?	'hau meni ə ðə 'left?
why aren't there any more?	'wai ɑ:nt ðər eni 'mɔ:?
there was a tremendous crowd	ðə wəz ə trə'mendəs 'kraud
I believe there was	ai bə'li:v ðə 'wɔz
he told me there wasn't any	hi: 'tould mi: ðə 'wɔznt eni
what was there to see?	'wɔt wəz ðə tə 'si:?
why was there?	'wai wɔz ðə?
there were a few left	ðə wər ə 'fju: 'left
I hope there were	ai 'houp ðə 'wə:
there weren't many	ðə 'wə:nt 'meni
why were there so many?	'wai wə ðə sou 'meni?
there'll be a lot left	ðə l bi: ə 'lɔt 'left
yes, I think there will be	'jes ai 'θiŋk ðə 'wil bi:
there won't be much time	ðə 'wount bi: mʌtʃ 'taim
won't there be enough?	'wount ðə bi: ə'nʌf?
he said there'd be plenty	hi: 'sed ðə d bi: 'plenti
would there be room?	'wud ðə bi: 'ru:m?
I suppose there wouldn't	ai 'spouz ðə 'wudnt
why wouldn't there?	'wai wudnt ðə?

there have been many mistakes	ðə(r ə)v bi:n 'meni mis'teiks
I'm sure there have	ai m 'ʃuə ðə hæv
I suppose there haven't	ai 'spouz ðə 'hævnt
haven't there?	'hævnt ðə?
there'd been plenty	ðə d bi:n 'plenti
there hadn't been any	ðə 'hædnt 'bi:n eni
why had there?	'wai hæd ðə?
I believe there has	ai bə'li:v ðə 'hæz
there hasn't been much	ðə 'hæznt bi:n 'mʌtʃ
what damage has there been?	'wɔt 'dæmidʒ əz ðə bi:n?
why hasn't there been more?	'wai hæznt ðə bi:n 'mɔə?
there do seem to be some	ðə 'du: si:m tə 'bi: sʌm
there don't seem to be any	ðə 'dount si:m tə 'bi: eni
I believe there does	ai bə'li:v ðə 'dʌz
I'm afraid there doesn't	ai m ə'freid ðə 'dʌznt
doesn't there?	'dʌznt ðə?
there must have been hundreds	ðə 'mʌst əv bi:n 'hʌndrədz
yes, there must have	'jes ðə 'mʌst hæv
why must there be one?	'wai məs ðə 'bi: wʌn?
mustn't there?	'mʌsnt ðə?
there can only be one	ðə kən 'ounli bi: 'wʌn
I think there can	ai 'θiŋk ðə kæn
there can't be many	ðə 'kɑ:nt bi: 'meni
of course there could	əv 'kɔ:s ðə kud
there couldn't be another	ðə 'kudnt bi: ə'nʌðə
what else could there be?	'wɔt 'els kəd ðə bi:?

(iii) *Be, he, she, we, me.* The strong forms are bi: hi: ʃi: wi: mi:. When unstressed the words are often (but not necessarily) weakened to bi hi ʃi wi mi.

(iv) *You, who.* The strong forms are ju: hu:. When unstressed they are often weakened to ju hu.

(v) *He, him, his, her, who.* The strong forms are hi: him hiz hə:(r) hu:. When unstressed, the h is generally dropped unless the word is initial.

(vi) *My, your.* The strong forms are mai, jɔ:(r) or juə(r). In familiar speech they can be weakened to mi, jə(r). But these forms should be used with caution.

(vii) If an unstressed preposition is followed by an unstressed personal pronoun, either the strong or the weak form of the preposition may be used:

he gave it to them	hi: 'geiv it tu: ðəm hi: 'geiv it tə ðəm	*or*
they called for me	ðei 'kɔ:ld fɔ: mi ðei 'kɔ:ld fə mi	*or*
I looked at him	ai 'lukt æt im ai 'lukt ət im	*or*
that's the worst of it	'ðæt s ðə 'wə:st ɔv it 'ðæt s ðə 'wə:st əv it	*or*

(viii) Certain other words have weak forms which may or may not be used. For example:

many	'meni	məni
any	'eni	əni
or	'ɔ:(r)	ə(r)

how many miles is it?	'hau meni 'mailz iz it? 'hau məni 'mailz iz it?	*or*

has he got any more?	həz i: 'gɔt eni 'mɔ:?	*or*
	həz i: 'gɔt əni 'mɔ:?	
one or two	'wʌn ɔ: 'tu:	*or*
	'wʌn ə 'tu:	

If you are in doubt, it is safer to use the strong form of such words.

(ix) The word *this* ðis may be weakened to ðəs in the following phrases:

this morning	ðə'smɔ:niŋ
this afternoon	ðə'sɑ:ftə'nu:n
this evening	ðə'si:vniŋ

(x) The following do not have weak forms:

do, does, have, has, had (main verbs)
that (demonstrative pronoun)
there (adverb of place)
some (indefinite pronoun)
when, then, on.

Examples of the above in unstressed position:

I didn't do that parcel up	ai 'didnt du: ðæt 'pɑ:sl ʌp
he never does a stroke	hi: 'nevə dʌz ə 'strouk
we seldom have time	wi: 'seldəm hæv 'taim
she never has a cold	ʃi: 'nevə hæz ə 'kould
he'd had great experience	hi: d hæd 'greit iks'piəriəns
I went there when I was six	ai 'went ðɛə wen ai wəz 'siks
he's gone on some trip	hi: z 'gɔn ɔn sʌm 'trip
it's not on that list	it s 'nɔt ɔn ðæt 'list
well then, let's have it now	'wel ðen, 'let s hæv it 'nau

10

Elision and Assimilation

Elision means the dropping of a sound or sounds, either within the body of a word or at a junction of words.

(i) Within a word, an unstressed vowel between two consonants is often elided:

specially	'speʃli	perhaps	præps
awfully	'ɔ:fli	medicine	'medsn
every	'evri	chocolate	'tʃɔklət
secretary	'sekrətri	general	'dʒenrəl
strawberry	'strɔ:bri	several	'sevrəl
ordinary	'ɔ:dnri	sovereign	'sɔvrin
history	'histri	natural	'nætʃrəl
reasonable	'ri:znəbl	national	'næʃnəl
comfortable	'kʌmftəbl	I suppose	ai'spouz

The elided forms of these words are the ones most commonly used in everyday speech. But there is no comprehensive rule about such elisions, and you must study them with the aid of a pronouncing dictionary.

(ii) Elision is a common feature of weak forms (see p. 38):

is	'iz	*but*	he's going	hi: z 'gouiŋ
am	'æm	*but*	I'm going	ai m 'gouiŋ
have	'hæv	*but*	they've gone	ðei v 'gɔn

he	'hi:	*but*	is he going?	iz i: 'gouiŋ?
and	'ænd	*but*	bread and butter	'bred n 'bʌtə
will	'wil	*but*	that'll do	'ðæt l 'du:

(iii) A group of consonants may be reduced by elision. In particular, we find elision of t or d between two other consonants:

friends	frendz	*or*	frenz
handbag	'hændbæg	*or*	'hænbæg
grandstand	'grændstænd	*or*	'grænstænd
sandwich	'sændwitʃ	*or*	'sænwitʃ
Westminster	'westminstə	*or*	'wesminstə
isthmus	'isθməs	*or*	'ismәs
the first time	ðə 'fə:st 'taim	*or*	ðə 'fə:s 'taim
last night	'lɑ:st 'nait	*or*	'lɑ:s 'nait
next stop	'nekst 'stɔp	*or*	'neks 'stɔp
just now	'dʒʌst 'nau	*or*	'dʒʌs 'nau
I used to	ai 'ju:st tu	*or*	ai 'ju:s tu
I want to	ai 'wɔnt tu	*or*	ai 'wɔn tu

Such elisions should be practised with caution, as they are not always permissible. In general, a double consonant at a word junction must not be reduced by elision:

what time?	'wɔt 'taim	*not*	'wɔ 'taim
with this	wið 'ðis	*not*	wi 'ðis
a black cat	ə 'blæk 'kæt	*not*	ə 'blæ 'kæt
a clean knife	ə 'kli:n 'naif	*not*	ə 'kli: 'naif
a fresh shirt	ə 'freʃ 'ʃə:t	*not*	ə 'fre 'ʃə:t
half full	'hɑ:f 'ful	*not*	'hɑ: 'ful

In any such phrase, the two consonants should be run together smoothly without a break.

Assimilation means a modification of pronunciation which a word may undergo when in contact with another word. One sound is replaced by another under the influence of an adjoining sound in the neighbouring word. The following assimilations are common in English:

(i) z changes to s

is	iz	*but*	it's easy	it s 'i:zi
has	hæz	*but*	what's happened?	'wɔt s 'hæpənd
used	ju:zd	*but*	I used to	ai 'ju:st tu

(ii) n t d change to m p b

ten	ten	*but*	ten minutes	'tem 'minits
don't	dount	*but*	don't be late	'doump bi 'leit
good	gud	*but*	good bye	'gub 'bai

(iii) n t d change to ŋ k g

in	in	*but*	in case	iŋ 'keis
don't	dount	*but*	I don't care	ai 'douŋk 'kɛə
good	gud	*but*	good girl	'gug 'gə:l

(iv) s z change to ʃ ʒ

this	ðis	*but*	this shape	'ðiʃ 'ʃeip
has	hæz	*but*	has she come?	'hæʒ ʃi 'kʌm

Assimilations of types (ii), (iii) and (iv) may be regarded as optional, and are limited to a quick, free-and-easy style of speaking.

There is a kind of assimilation, common to many other languages, which some students mistakenly apply to English. They should remember that a voiceless

plosive or fricative is not assimilated to a voiced plosive or fricative which follows it.

Examples:

not very	'nɔt 'veri	*not*	'nɔd 'veri
back door	'bæk 'dɔə	*not*	'bæg 'dɔə
if they come	'if ðei 'kʌm	*not*	'iv ðei 'kʌm
across the sea	ə'krɔs ðə 'si:	*not*	ə'krɔz ðə 'si:
this boy	'ðis 'bɔi	*not*	'ðiz 'bɔi
that girl	'ðæt 'gə:l	*not*	'ðæd 'gə:l

II

The Pronunciation of Sentences

THE LINKING OF WORDS

Words which are not separated from each other by a pause must be joined together smoothly in pronunciation. Failure to do this is one of the commonest mistakes of foreign learners. The usual fault is to insert a *glottal stop* before each word beginning with a vowel. The glottal stop is made by a tightening of the vocal cords in the larynx, by which the outgoing breath is obstructed and then abruptly released. (We do this when we 'hold our breath' and when we cough.) Indiscriminate use of the glottal stop by a learner may be due to nervous tension or a feeling of uncertainty. Some native speakers of English, also, have a bad habit of using it to excess, which is not to be imitated. You should make a point of saying phrases with a smooth transition from one word to the next, wherever the second word begins with a vowel. Remember that a final *r* is sounded if the next word begins with a vowel. Practise these phrases as if each was a single word:

it is	iˈtiz	an egg	əˈneg
his own	hiˈzoun	if only	iˈfounli
for ever	fəˈrəvə	there isn't	ðəˈriznt
at Easter	əˈtiːstə	in August	iˈnɔːgəst
some oil	səˈmɔil	good evening	guˈdiːvniŋ

keep on	'ki:'pɔn	come out	'kʌ'maut
big eyes	'bi'gaiz	twice over	'twai'souvə
full up	'fu'lʌp	half open	'hɑ:'foupən
this is it	'ðisi'zit	six o'clock	'siksə'klɔk
put it on	'puti'tɔn	take it off	'teiki'tɔf
not at all	'nɔtə'tɔ:l	first of all	'fə:stə'vɔ:l
let him in	'leti'min	pick it up	'piki'tʌp

When the first word also ends with a vowel, you must still link the two words without a break:

too easy	'tu:'i:zi	three hours	'θri:'auəz
the end	ði'end	to ask	tu'ɑ:sk
my uncle	mai'ʌŋkl	B.E.A.	'bi:'i:'ei

Another fault is to insert a glottal stop before a stressed vowel within a word. See that you avoid doing this in such words as the following:

unable	ʌn'eibl	transaction	trænz'ækʃn
react	ri:'ækt	Antarctic	ænt'ɑ:ktik
chaotic	kei'ɔtik	association	əsousi'eiʃn
biography	bai'ɔgrəfi	cooperate	kou'ɔpəreit

If you find it difficult to acquire the habit of joining words smoothly, draw a link between them in your reading book, thus: *it is*, *an egg*, *his own*, *for ever*. It is also a good idea, in practising, to rearrange the sounds in your mind, so that each word begins with a consonant instead of a vowel:

for ever	fə 'revə	there isn't	ðə 'riznt
keep on	'ki: 'pɔn	half open	'hɑ: 'foupən
not at all	'nɔtə 'tɔ:l	first of all	'fə:stə 'vɔ:l

In such phrases, the listener's ear should receive the impression of an uninterrupted flow of sound. The inner

boundaries of the words are not marked in sound, but are understood from the context of meaning and the grammatical structure of the sentence. This does not mean to say that we cannot distinguish in pronunciation between *not at all* (*bad*) and *not a tall* (*man*), or between *a name* and *an aim*, or between *made a veil* and *made of ale*. But in normal conversation many small phonetic differences are hardly perceptible; and the listener does not rely on them alone for comprehension of what is said.

It is an important part of successful language study to reconcile the spoken and written forms in a constructive way. This is too often neglected. It is wrong to deplore the spelling of English and regard it as a hindrance. Such an attitude only obscures the light which orthography and phonetic transcription can shed on each other. You must be able to perceive how each works, without being the slave of either. The latitudes permitted in speech are exploited most fully and expertly when tempered by an understanding of the guiding and elucidatory function of the spelling.

THE GROUPING OF WORDS

We have seen that every word, when said alone, bears a strong stress-accent on one of its syllables. This is called *word stress*. In continuous speech we do not hear a strong accent on every word. Some words lose their accent, especially when we talk quickly. But other words keep their accent; and these stressed syllables form what is called *sentence stress*.

The pronunciation of words in continuous speech is based upon *stress-groups*. A stress-group is formed by a strongly stressed, prominent syllable, together with any

unstressed, non-prominent syllables which cluster about it. A single word may form such a group:

tomorrow	tə'mɔrou	yesterday	'jestədi

or it may contain more than one word:

in a minute	inə'minit
of course	əv'kɔ:s
thank you	'θæŋkju:
I'll see to it	ail'si:tuit
the biggest one	ðə'bigistwʌn
they've got it	ðeiv'gɔtit

You will often find that two strong stresses are so closely associated that they cannot be separated by a pause, but are treated as a double-stress-group. Such a double group may be a pair of stressed syllables standing together:

one day	'wʌn'dei	yes please	'jes'pli:z
good night	'gud'nait	sixteen	'siks'ti:n
sublet	'sʌb'let	renamed	'ri:'neimd

or they may form a cluster with unstressed syllables:

hurry up	'hʌri'ʌp
what a pity	'wɔtə'piti
it's all right	its'ɔ:l'rait
bring it down	'briŋit'daun
a cup of tea	ə'kʌpəv'ti:
this afternoon	ðəs'ɑ:ftə'nu:n
the man's mad	ðə'mænz'mæd
I put on my hat	ai'putɔnmai'hæt

All the syllables of a stress-group, or of a double-stress-group, are knit together as if they made a single word. Practise saying many phrases of this kind, and

try to feel how the strongly accented syllable gives unity to each group. Now is the time to make sure that you weaken unstressed vowels, and use weak forms of structural words, wherever necessary.

The next exercise is to take short sentences and divide them into stress-groups. It may be that a short sentence consists entirely of stressed monosyllables. In this case each word forms a stress-group by itself:

➢ John came last night	'dʒɔn 'keim 'lɑ:st 'nait
don't do that here	'dount 'du: 'ðæt 'hiə
what nice soft gloves	'wɔt 'nais 'sɔft 'glʌvz

But more often there will be some unstressed syllables forming clusters about the strong ones:

John's away on business
'dʒɔnz ə'wei ɔn'biznis

thank you for the letter
'θæŋkju fəðə'letə

they went for a walk in the park
ðei'went fərə'wɔ:k inðə'pɑ:k

I'm going to the theatre tonight
aim'gouiŋ təðə'θiətə tə'nait

I sent them a photo of the children
ai'sentðəm ə'foutou əvðə'tʃildrən

what a delightful surprise
'wɔt ədi'laitful sə'praiz

I hope you won't be late for your appointment
ai'houp ju'wount bi'leit fəjɔ:rə'pɔintmənt

you can get there by bus from Liverpool Street
ju:kŋ'getðɛə bai'bʌs frəm'livəpu:lstri:t

somebody called when you were out
'sʌmbədi 'kɔ:ld wenjuwər'aut

skirts'll be a little shorter next season
'skə:tslbi ə'litl 'ʃɔ:tə 'nekst 'si:zn

will it be a nuisance if I leave it here?
'wilitbi ə'nju:sns ifai'li:vit 'hiə?

I should think it would be better to wait till tomorrow
aiʃəd'θiŋk itədbi'betə tə'weit tiltə'mɔrou

When you can say each group easily, then you must link them together smoothly. Unless the sense allows a pause, stress-groups must be joined without a break in actual speech. Sometimes it is difficult to decide which group a word logically belongs to. For example, in *it's impossible for me to say*, where does *for me* belong? Should we divide it like this:

itsim'pɔsibl fəmitə'sei

or like this?

itsim'pɔsiblfəmi tə'sei

In practice this uncertainty does not matter, because the sense requires that the two groups should be put together without a pause. So they are treated like a double-stress-group.

Let us summarise what has been said so far. We have been regarding every spoken 'sentence' as divisible into

groups, each group consisting of one or more words closely connected by sense and grammar, but containing only one strongly accented syllable (or, in the case of a double-stress-group, two strong stresses). But now we must observe another very important principle, which comes into effect as soon as we utter the sentence as a whole. It is the principle of *sentence rhythm*, which tells us that the strongly stressed syllables of a sentence are separated by roughly equal intervals of time. In other words, the sentence is endowed with a regular beat, which falls upon each successive strongly accented syllable. You must learn to feel this contrastive rhythm when you speak. Rhythm gives life, shape and effectiveness to a sentence, apart from the meaning given by the words; and if we do not find the right rhythm, our meaning may be weakened or obscured.

(In what has been said above, a 'sentence' means a fairly short utterance, sometimes called a 'breath group'. A written sentence is often longer than this, and may comprise more than one such utterance.)

From the point of view of sentence rhythm, a sentence can be divided into groups like bars in music, each group beginning with a stressed syllable. But because the rhythm of speech is more free and elastic than that of music, we do not 'keep time' with the exact regularity of a recurrent musical beat, but only with approximate regularity. Putting it another way, one might say that sentence rhythm means a tendency to make the strong stresses stand as evenly distributed in time as the structure of the sentence permits.

Now take some of the sentences given above, and divide them up in this new way, noticing how the new groups differ from the stress-groups:

John's away on business
'dʒɔnzə 'weiɔn 'biznis

thank you for the letter
'θæŋkjufəðə 'letə

what a delightful surprise
'wɔtədi 'laitfulsə 'praiz

somebody called when you were out
'sʌmbədi 'kɔ:ldwenjuwə‿'aut

will it be a nuisance if I leave it here?
'wilitbiə 'nju:snsifai 'li:vit 'hiə?

If there are any initial unstressed syllables, they are attached to the first group:

they went for a walk in the park
ðei'wentfərə 'wɔ:kinðə 'pɑ:k

I'm going to the theatre tonight
aim'gouiŋtəðə 'θiətətə 'nait

I sent them a photo of the children
ai'sentðəmə 'foutouəvðə 'tʃildrən

you can get there by bus from Liverpool Street
ju:kŋ'getðɛəbai 'bʌsfrəm 'livəpu:lstri:t

I should think it would be better to wait till tomorrow
aiʃəd'θiŋkitədbi 'betətə 'weittiltə 'mɔrou

When you are practising you may say each group separately, with a pause after it, in order to get the feel

of the contrastive rhythm. Of course, you must not make such pauses in actual speech, but must join the groups together smoothly to make a continuous whole. The average speed of utterance of any sentence is tentatively established as soon as we have said the first two strongly stressed syllables. This sets the rhythm of the sentence in being, and the remaining strong stresses will fit in with it as nearly as possible. You will notice that the rate of speaking constantly varies. When two strong accents occur close together, our speed is less. When they are separated by unstressed syllables, our speed is greater. The rate of speech becomes faster or slower according to whether the number of unstressed syllables between strong accents is larger or smaller. Even when the distribution of strong accents is so irregular as to make an evenly timed beat impossible, we allow sufficient latitude for those beats to form the rhythmic basis of the sentence; and we do not let the intervening unstressed syllables upset this pattern in our mind. Look at this example:

➢ he realised that the bus wasn't going to stop for him
hi'riəlaizdðətðə 'bʌs 'wɔzntgouiŋtə 'stɔpfərim ◀

The sentence rhythm is based upon:

'riə — 'bʌs — 'wɔz — 'stɔp

Between riə and bʌs there are three syllables; and between wɔz and stɔp there are also three. But between bʌs and wɔz there are none. Therefore we reduce speed on bʌs and rest upon that syllable for an appreciable time. Then we pick up our former speed between wɔz and stɔp. The pause on bʌs will not be enough to make the second group exactly as long as the first and third. But it is enough to let us feel the rhythmic beat on those four

syllables as the backbone, as it were, of the sentence. Now take another example:

> it's a pity the book hasn't got any photographs
> itsə'pitiðə 'buk 'hæzntgɔteni 'foutəgræfs <

The sentence rhythm is based upon:

'pit — 'buk — 'hæz — 'fou

Here we have two unstressed syllables after pit, none after buk, and four after hæz. Therefore, after a similar pause on buk, we shall increase speed still more between hæz and fou.

Here are some more specimen sentences, each divided first into stress-groups and secondly into rhythmic groups, for comparison:

> I read an account of it in the *Daily Telegraph*
> ai'red ənə'kauntəvit inðə'deili 'teligra:f
> ai'redənə 'kauntəvitinðə 'deili 'teligra:f

as a matter of fact it wasn't altogether successful
əzə'mætər əv'fækt it'wɔznt ɔ:ltə'geðə sək'sesfl
əzə'mætərəv 'fæktit 'wɔzntɔ:ltə 'geðəsək 'sesfl

there was an unending succession of unfortunate events
ðəwəzənʌn'endiŋ sək'seʃn əvʌn'fɔ:tʃənət i'vents
ðəwəzənʌn'endiŋsək 'seʃnəvʌn 'fɔ:tʃənəti 'vents

the theme's been woven into the plot of many a novel
ðə'θi:mz bi:n'wouvən intəðə'plɔt əv'meni ə'nɔvl
ðə'θi:mzbi:n 'wouvənintəðə 'plɔtəv 'meniə 'nɔvl

why don't you have an aluminium one?
'wai dountju'hæv ənælju'minjəmwʌn?
'waidountju 'hævənælju 'minjəmwʌn?

John's a person you can really rely on
'dʒɔnz ə'pə:sn jukən'riəli ri'laiɔn
'dʒɔnzə 'pə:snjukən 'riəliri 'laiɔn

Sarah nearly had a catastrophe with the meringues
'sɛərə 'niəli hædəkə'tæstrəfi wiððəmə'ræŋz
'sɛərə 'niəlihædəkə 'tæstrəfiwiððəmə 'ræŋz

Your object must be to achieve such a subtle balance between the two kinds of grouping that neither of them unduly predominates, whether in your own mind or the listener's ear. Successful results depend upon patient analysis and much observation of native speakers, in order to acquire a sense of sentence rhythm. And the most important single factor in this is knowing where to place the strong stress-accents.

ANALYSIS OF A PASSAGE, SENTENCE BY SENTENCE

1. *The other day, we thought we would go and have a look at the London Museum.*

Words carrying sentence stress: *other, day, thought, go, look, London, Museum.*
Words with weak forms: *the, (we), would, and, a, at, the.*
Warning: *have* is a main verb, not auxiliary, and is not weakened even though unstressed.
Arrangement of stress-groups: ði'ʌðə 'dei wi'θɔ:t wid'gou ənhævə'luk ətðə'lʌndən mju:'zi:əm.

2. *So we got on a fifty-two bus in the station yard at Victoria, and started off.*

Words carrying sentence stress: *got, fifty, bus, station, yard, Victoria, started, off.*
Words with weak forms: *(we), a, the, at, and.*

Warning: *so* is unstressed when connective (like *and* or *but*). There are no weak forms of *on* and *in*.
Arrangement of stress-groups: souwi'gɔtɔn ə'fiftitu: 'bʌs inðə'steiʃn 'jɑ:d ətvik'tɔ:riə, ən'stɑ:tid 'ɔf.

3. *We had a lovely view from the top of the bus, and saw the Horse Guards just as they were passing Hyde Park Corner.*

Words carrying sentence stress: *lovely, view, top, bus, saw, Horse, just, passing, Hyde, Corner.*
Words with weak forms: (*we*), *a, from, the, of, the, and, the, as, were.*
Warning: *had* is a main verb, not weakened. Incomplete plosives in *Hyde Park Corner.* (*Park* would be stressed if not followed by *Corner.*)
Arrangement of stress-groups: wihædə'lʌvli 'vju: frəmðə'tɔp əvðə'bʌs, ən'sɔ: ðə'hɔ:sgɑ:dz 'dʒʌstəz ðeiwə'pɑ:siŋ 'haidpɑ:k 'kɔ:nə.

4. *The girls had never come this way before, and they would have liked to explore the shops, if only there had been more time.*

Words carrying sentence stress: *girls, come, before, liked, explore, shops, only, been, time.*
Words with weak forms: *the, had, and, would, have, to, the, there, had.*
Arrangement of stress-groups: ðə'gə:lz ədnevə'kʌmðiswei bi'fɔə, ənðeidəv'laikt tuiks'plɔə ðə'ʃɔps, if'ounli ðəd'bi:n mɔ:'taim.

5. *But we had to hurry, and even then, when we did get to the Museum, it was almost closing time.*

Words carrying sentence stress: *had, hurry, even, then, did, museum, almost, closing.*

Words with weak forms: *but*, (*we*), *to*, *and*, (*we*), *to*, *the*, *was*.
Warning: *when* is not weakened. In *did get* (= emphatic *got*) the stress accent is concentrated on *did*.
Arrangement of stress-groups: bətwi'hæd tə'hʌri, ən'i:vn 'ðen, wenwi'didget təðəmju:'zi:əm, itwəz'ɔ:lmoust 'klouziŋtaim.

6. *On the way back, John got so excited over the model boats on the Round Pond that he nearly fell in.*

Words carrying sentence stress: *on*, *back*, *John*, *so*, *excited*, *model*, *boats*, *Round*, *Pond*, *nearly*, *in*.
Words with weak forms: *the*, *the*, *the*, *that*, *he*.
Warning: note assimilation of n in *John*.
Arrangement of stress-groups: 'ɔnðəwei 'bæk, 'dʒɔŋgɔt 'sou ik'saitid ouvəðə'mɔdl 'bouts ɔnðə'raund 'pɔnd ðəti:'niəli fe'lin.

7. *At last he managed to drag himself away, and the girls said, could we go back by underground?*

Words carrying sentence stress: *last*, *managed*, *drag*, *away*, *girls*, *could*, *back*, *underground*.
Words with weak forms: *at*, *he*, *to*, *and*, *the*, (*we*).
Warning: *himself* and other reflexive pronouns do not normally carry sentence stress when they form the object of a verb. (The same applies to the reciprocal pronouns *each other* and *one another*.)
Arrangement of stress-groups: ət'lɑ:st i:'mænidʒd tə'drægimself ə'wei, ənðə'gə:lzsed 'kudwi gou'bæk bai'ʌndəgraund.

8. *There was no difficulty about catching an Inner Circle train at Kensington High Street, but we had no sooner got in than we found ourselves going in the wrong direction.*

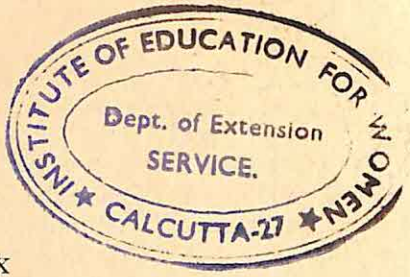
Words carrying sentence stress: *no, difficulty, catching, Inner, Circle, Kensington, High, no, in, found, going, wrong, direction.*
Words with weak forms: *there, was, an, at, but, (we), had, than, (we), the.*
Arrangement of stress-groups: ðəwəz'nou 'difikiti əbaut'kætʃiŋ ən'inə 'sə:kltrein ət'kenziŋtən 'haistri:t. bətwi:d'nousu:nə gɔt'in ðənwi'faundauəselvz 'gouiŋ inðə'rɔŋ di'rekʃn.

9. *Of course, John wanted to stay in the train and go home the long way round, but I put my foot down and would not hear of it.*
Words carrying sentence stress: *course, John, stay, train, go, long, round, put, foot, would, hear.*
Words with weak forms: *of, to, the, and, the, but, and, not, (of).*
Warning: either the strong or the weak form of *of* can be used in this situation.
Arrangement of stress-groups: əv'kɔ:s, 'dʒɔnwɔntid tə'stei inðə'trein əŋ'gouhoum ðə'lɔŋwei 'raund, bətai'put mai'futdaun ən'wudnt 'hiərəvit ('hiərɔvit).

10. *In the end we got out at Baker Street, and I had to console the children by taking them to the waxworks.*
Words carrying sentence stress: *end, got, Baker, console, children, taking, waxworks.*
Words with weak forms: *the, (we), at, and, to, the, them, to, the.*
Warning: at the beginning of a sentence *in* may often be stressed. *Had* might also be stressed in this sentence; but even when unstressed it is not weakened, because it

is a main verb, not auxiliary. *Out* might have been stressed instead of *got*.

Arrangement of stress-groups: inði'end wi'gɔtaut ət'beikəstri:t, ənaihædtəkən'soul ðə'tʃildrən bai'teikiŋðəm təðə'wækswə:ks.



Appendix

UNSTRESSED PREFIXES

be-, **de-**, **pre-**, **re**, **se-** are pronounced with either i or ə.

become	bi'kʌm	*or*	bə'kʌm
before	bi'fɔ:	*or*	bə'fɔ:
decide	di'said	*or*	də'said
deposit	di'pɔzit	*or*	də'pɔzit
prefer	pri'fə:	*or*	prə'fə:
pretend	pri'tend	*or*	prə'tend
remain	ri'mein	*or*	rə'mein
repeat	ri'pi:t	*or*	rə'pi:t
select	si'lekt	*or*	sə'lekt

e-, **em-**, **en-**, **ex-** are pronounced with i.

effect	i'fekt	election	i'lekʃn
employ	im'plɔi	embankment	im'bæŋkmənt
enjoy	in'dʒɔi	engage	iŋ'geidʒ
enquire	iŋ'kwaiə	enclosure	iŋ'klouʒə
exist	ig'zist	experience	iks'piəriəns

pro-, **col-**, **com-**, **con-**, **cor-**, and various combinations of **su-** are pronounced with ə.

protect	prə'tekt	provision	prə'viʒn
pronounce	prə'nauns	prohibit	prə'hibit
collapse	kə'læps	collection	kə'lekʃn
collision	kə'liʒn	commercial	kə'mə:ʃl
compare	kəm'pɛə	communion	kə'mju:njən

combined	kəm'baind	connect	kə'nekt
continue	kən'tinju:	conclude	kəŋ'klu:d
correct	kə'rekt	corrupt	kə'rʌpt
submit	səb'mit	succeed	sək'si:d
sufficient	sə'fiʃnt	suggest	sə'dʒest
suppose	sə'pouz	surprise	sə'praiz
surround	sə'raund	suspicion	səs'piʃn

UNSTRESSED ENDINGS

-s (Plural of nouns, possessive case of nouns, and 3rd person singular present tense of verbs.)

(i) Pronounced iz after any of the following sounds:
s z ʃ ʒ tʃ dʒ.

place	places	pleis	'pleisiz
cross	crosses	krɔs	'krɔsiz
circus	circuses	'sə:kəs	'sə:kəsiz
Alice	Alice's	'ælis	'ælisiz
rose	roses	rouz	'rouziz
please	pleases	pli:z	'pli:ziz
James	James's	dʒeimz	'dʒeimziz
flourish	flourishes	'flʌriʃ	'flʌriʃiz
garage	garages	'gærɑ:ʒ	'gærɑ:ʒiz
fetch	fetches	fetʃ	'fetʃiz
manage	manages	'mænidʒ	'mænidʒiz
carriage	carriages	'kæridʒ	'kæridʒiz
George	George's	dʒɔ:dʒ	'dʒɔ:dʒiz

(ii) Pronounced z after a vowel or a voiced consonant (except z ʒ dʒ)

employ	employs	im'plɔi	im'plɔiz
country	countries	'kʌntri	'kʌntriz
know	knows	nou	nouz
reader	readers	'ri:də	'ri:dəz

prefer	prefers	pri'fə:	pri'fə:z
colour	colours	'kʌlə	'kʌləz
name	names	neim	neimz
John	John's	dʒɔn	dʒɔnz
wave	waves	weiv	weivz
tell	tells	tel	telz
David	David's	'deivid	'deividz

(iii) Pronounced s after a voiceless consonant (except s ʃ tʃ)

cat	cats	kæt	kæts
take	takes	teik	teiks
laugh	laughs	lɑ:f	lɑ:fs
Edith	Edith's	'i:diθ	'i:diθs

-ed (Past form of verbs.)

(i) Pronounced id after t and d.

state	stated	steit	'steitid
present	presented	pri'zent	pri'zentid
sound	sounded	saund	'saundid
fit	fitted	fit	'fitid
nod	nodded	nɔd	'nɔdid

(ii) Pronounced d after a vowel or voiced consonant (except d).

employ	employed	im'plɔi	im'plɔid
marry	married	'mæri	'mærid
try	tried	trai	traid
wonder	wondered	'wʌndə	'wʌndəd
murmur	murmured	'mə:mə	'mə:məd
prefer	preferred	pri'fə:	pri'fə:d
insure	insured	in'ʃuə	in'ʃuəd
name	named	neim	neimd
breathe	breathed	bri:ð	bri:ðd

beg	begged	beg	begd
rob	robbed	rɔb	rɔbd
judge	judged	dʒʌdʒ	dʒʌdʒd

(iii) Pronounced t after a voiceless consonant (except t).

laugh	laughed	la:f	la:ft
stop	stopped	stɔp	stɔpt
march	marched	ma:tʃ	ma:tʃt
look	looked	luk	lukt
dress	dressed	dres	drest

(iv) The following have two forms:

	Past Tense and Participle	*Adjective*
learned	lə:nd	'lə:nid
blessed	blest	'blesid
cursed	kə:st	'kə:sid
crooked	krukt	'krukid
ragged	rægd	'rægid
jagged	dʒægd	'dʒægid
dogged	dɔgd	'dɔgid
aged	eidʒd	'eidʒid

N.B.: naked 'neikid
wicked 'wikid

-er ə

father	'fa:ðə	whether	'weðə
better	'betə	worker	'wə:kə
wanderer	'wɔndərə	doer	'du:ə

-ar ə

circular	'sə:kjulə	popular	'pɔpjulə
sugar	'ʃugə	scholar	'skɔlə
liar	'laiə	vinegar	'vinigə

-ur ə

murmur	'mə:mə	sulphur	'sʌlfə

-or ə

conductor	kən'dʌktə	author	'ɔ:θə
surveyor	sə:'veiə	orator	'ɔrətə
senior	'si:niə	prior	'praiə
error	'erə	motor	'moutə

-our ə

behaviour	bi'heivjə	endeavour	in'devə
humour	'hju:mə	honour	'ɔnə
harbour	'hɑ:bə	colour	'kʌlə

-re ə

theatre	'θiətə	reconnoitre	rekə'nɔitə
centre	'sentə	manoeuvre	mə'nu:və
metre	'mi:tə	mediocre	mi:di'oukə
fibre	'faibə	calibre	'kælibə
meagre	'mi:gə	massacre	'mæsəkə
mitre	'maitə	litre	'li:tə

-ard əd

standard	'stændəd	hazard	'hæzəd
cupboard	'kʌbəd	steward	'stjuəd
awkward	'ɔ:kwəd	forward	'fɔ:wəd
upward	'ʌpwəd	orchard	'ɔ:tʃəd

N.B.: placard 'plækɑ:d

-ary əri

vocabulary	və'kæbjuləri	library	'laibrəri
honorary	'ɔnərəri	primary	'praiməri
January	'dʒænjuəri	contrary	'kɔntrəri

N.B.: ordinary 'ɔ:dnri

-ory əri

territory	'teritəri	memory	'meməri
introductory	intrə'dʌktəri	ivory	'aivəri
history	'histəri	victory	'viktəri

N.B.: in some words the ə is often elided, as in 'histri, 'viktri, etc.

-om əm

custom	'kʌstəm	bottom	'bɔtəm
atom	'ætəm	venom	'venəm
kingdom	'kiŋdəm	freedom	'fri:dəm

-um əm

maximum	'mæksiməm	museum	mju:'zi:əm
stadium	'steidiəm	vacuum	'vækjuəm

-am əm

madam	'mædəm	bantam	'bæntəm
Birmingham	'bə:miŋəm	amalgam	ə'mælgəm

N.B.: diagram 'daiəgræm
telegram 'teligræm

-em əm

system	'sistəm	problem	'prɔbləm
theorem	'θiərəm	totem	'toutəm

N.B.: poem 'pouim

-some səm

tiresome	'taiəsəm	handsome	'hænsəm

Note: in many unstressed endings where there is an n or l sound, the weak vowel of the last syllable may drop out, making the n or l syllabic. This leads to endings of the type tn sn snt ʃn ʒn tl dl fl nl, etc., In the examples which follow, this omission of the vowel has

been indicated in those words where it is commonly practised. Notice also that many of the endings in *-al*, *-el*, *-il*, *-ol* resemble *-le* in pronunciation.

Examples of homophones:

principal	principle	'prinsipl
gambol	gamble	'gæmbl
medal	meddle	'medl
idol	idle	'aidl
counsel	council	'kaunsl
navel	naval	'neivl

-ain ən
in

Britain	'britn	villain	'vilən
certain	'sə:tn	curtain	'kə:tn
mountain	'mauntin	captain	'kæptin
fountain	'fauntin	bargain	'bɑ:gin

-en ən
in

citizen	'sitizn	oxygen	'ɔksidʒn
eleven	i'levn	garden	'gɑ:dn
fasten	'fɑ:sn	eaten	'i:tn
spoken	'spoukən	taken	'teikən
specimen	'spesimin	women	'wimin
kitchen	'kitʃin	chicken	'tʃikin

N.B.: omen 'oumen

-on ən

common	'kɔmən	lemon	'leмən
reason	'ri:zn	Avon	'eivn
button	'bntn	pardon	'pɑ:dn

-tion ʃən

mention	'menʃn	tradition	trə'diʃn
reception	ri'sepʃn	desertion	di'zə:ʃn

-stion stʃən

question	'kwestʃn	suggestion	sə'dʒestʃn

-sion (after a vowel letter) ʒən

division	di'viʒn	occasion	ə'keiʒn

-sion (after a consonant letter) ʃən

pension	'penʃn	version	'və:ʃn
mission	'miʃn	expression	iks'preʃn

-an ən

cardigan	'kɑ:digən	European	juərə'pi:ən
Roman	'roumən	veteran	'vetərən
organ	'ɔ:gən	urban	'ə:bən

-cian ʃən
-tian

musician	mju:'ziʃn	physician	fi'ziʃn
Venetian	vi'ni:ʃn	Egyptian	i'dʒipʃn

-and ənd

husband	'hʌzbənd	thousand	'θauznd
errand	'erənd	island	'ailənd

-ant ənt

merchant	'mə:tʃnt	inhabitant	in'hæbitnt
vacant	'veikənt	brilliant	'briljənt

-ance əns

balance	'bæləns	circumstance	'sə:kəmstəns
radiance	'reidiəns	substance	'sʌbstəns

-ent ənt
ent

element	'elimənt	innocent	'inəsənt
present	'preznt	different	'difrənt
patient	'peiʃnt	sufficient	sə'fiʃnt
experiment (*noun*)	iks'perimənt	experiment (*verb*)	iks'periment
comment	'kɔment	portent	'pɔ:tent
ferment (*noun*)	'fə:ment	torment (*noun*)	'tɔ:ment

-ence əns

presence	'prezns	licence	'laisns
influence	'influəns	conference	'kɔnfərəns

-ol əl

symbol	'simbl	pistol	'pistl
petrol	'petrəl	carol	'kærəl

N.B.: alcohol 'ælkəhɔl
protocol 'proutəkɔl

-el əl

channel	'tʃænl	enamel	i'næml
travel	'trævl	model	'mɔdl
vowel	'vauəl	cruel	'kruəl
jewel	'dʒuəl	gospel	'gɔspəl

-il əl

April	'eiprəl	devil	'devl
pupil	'pju:pl	pencil	'pensl

N.B.: tranquil 'træŋkwil
anvil 'ænvil
vigil 'vidʒil

-al əl

verbal	'və:bl	animal	'æniml
legal	'li:gl	aerial	'ɛəriəl
trivial	'triviəl	cordial	'kɔ:diəl
journal	'dʒə:nl	medical	'medikl
annual	'ænjuəl	equal	'i:kwəl

N.B.: usual 'ju:ʒl
actual 'æktʃuəl

-cial ʃəl
-tial

official	ə'fiʃl	racial	'reiʃl
initial	i'niʃl	partial	'pɑ:ʃl

-ful ful

beautiful	'bju:tifl	awful	'ɔ:fl
mouthful	'mauθful	useful	'ju:sfl

-ass əs

trespass	'trespəs	embarrass	im'bærəs
compass	'kʌmpəs	harass	'hærəs

-ess is

goddess	'gɔdis	authoress	'ɔ:θəris
duchess	'dʌtʃis	lioness	'laiənis

-less lis

helpless	'helplis	wireless	'waiəlis
useless	'ju:slis	colourless	'kʌləlis
restless	'restlis	priceless	'praislis

-ness nis

uselessness	'ju:slisnis	goodness	'gudnis
foolishness	'fu:liʃnis	witness	'witnis
greediness	'gri:dinis	illness	'ilnis

-ace is

terrace	'teris	surface	'sə:fis
menace	'menis	palace	'pælis

-age idʒ
ɑ:ʒ

patronage	'pætrənidʒ	luggage	'lʌgidʒ
cottage	'kɔtidʒ	courage	'kʌridʒ
image	'imidʒ	sausage	'sɔsidʒ
espionage	'espiənɑ:ʒ	garage	'gærɑ:ʒ
camouflage	'kæməflɑ:ʒ	massage	'mæsɑ:ʒ

N.B.: marriage 'mæridʒ
carriage 'kæridʒ

-ate ət, it

immediate	i'mi:diət	adequate	'ædikwət
passionate	'pæʃənət	delicate	'delikət
chocolate	'tʃɔklət	climate	'klaimət

eit (*verbs*)

penetrate	'penitreit	operate	'ɔpəreit
inoculate	i'nɔkjuleit	circulate	'sə:kjuleit

Compare the following:

	verb	*noun or adjective*
separate	'sepəreit	'sepərət
duplicate	'dju:plikeit	'dju:plikət
associate	ə'souʃieit	ə'souʃiət
moderate	'mɔdəreit	'mɔdərət

-ot ət

ballot	'bælət	pilot	'pailət
riot	'raiət	idiot	'idiət

-et it

interpret	in'tə:prit	cabinet	'kæbinit
ticket	'tikit	budget	'bʌdʒit
couplet	'kʌplit	poet	'pouit
prophet	'prɔfit	Hamlet	'hæmlit

N.B.: ballet 'bælei
buffet 'bufei
quiet 'kwaiət
diet 'daiət

-ite it
ait

favourite	'feivərit	hypocrite	'hipəkrit
composite	'kɔmpəzit	opposite	'ɔpəzit
definite	'definit	exquisite	'ekskwizit
satellite	'sætəlait	dynamite	'dainəmait
plebiscite	'plebisait	parasite	'pærəsait
Jacobite	'dʒækəbait	finite	'fainait

-ice is

practice	'præktis	service	'sə:vis
prejudice	'predʒudis	office	'ɔfis
accomplice	ə'kɔmplis	Alice	'ælis

N.B.: sacrifice 'sækrifais

-ise is

promise	'prɔmis	practise	'præktis
premise (*noun*)	'premis	treatise	'tri:tis

aiz (*other words*)

enterprise	'entəpraiz	exercise	'eksəsaiz
compromise	'kɔmprəmaiz	advertise	'ædvətaiz

N.B.: paradise 'pærədais

-ive iv

conservative	kən'sə:vətiv	motive	'moutiv
prohibitive	prə'hibitiv	olive	'ɔliv
effective	i'fektiv	relative	'relətiv

-ine in
ain
i:n

imagine	i'mædʒin	engine	'endʒin
examine	ig'zæmin	genuine	'dʒenjuin
discipline	'disiplin	determine	di'tə:min
feminine	'feminin	heroine	'herouin
serpentine	'sə:pəntain	feline	'fi:lain
libertine	'libətain	Alpine	'ælpain
carmine	'kɑ:main	combine (*noun*)	'kɔmbain
submarine	'sʌbməri:n	vaccine	'væksi:n
iodine	'aiədi:n	Pauline	'pɔ:li:n

N.B.: medicine 'medsn

-est ist

greatest	'greitist	blackest	'blækist
earnest	'ə:nist	honest	'ɔnist
modest	'mɔdist	forest	'fɔrist

est (*nouns*)

contest	'kɔntest	conquest	'kɔŋkwest
digest	'daidʒest	protest	'proutest

-us əs

omnibus	'ɔmnibəs	syllabus	'siləbəs
genius	'diʒ:niəs	genus	'dʒi:nəs
circus	'sə:kəs	minus	'mainəs
chorus	'kɔ:rəs	focus	'foukəs

-ous əs

monotonous	mə'nɔtənəs	tremendous	trə'mendəs
generous	'dʒenərəs	vigorous	'vigərəs
famous	'feiməs	hideous	'hidiəs
glorious	'glɔ:riəs	obvious	'ɔbviəs
serious	'siəriəs	rebellious	rə'beljəs
arduous	'a:djuəs	conspicuous	kən'spikjuəs
courteous	'kə:tiəs	spontaneous	spɔn'teiniəs

-cious ʃəs
-tious

spacious	'speiʃəs	malicious	mə'liʃəs
conscious	'kɔnʃəs	cautious	'kɔ:ʃəs
fictitious	fik'tiʃəs	infectious	in'fekʃəs

-geous dʒəs
-gious

gorgeous	'gɔ:dʒəs	courageous	kə'reidʒəs
religious	rə'lidʒəs	prodigious	prə'didʒəs

-ure jə

failure	'feiljə	tenure	'tenjə

N.B.: figure 'figə

-ture tʃə

furniture	'fə:nitʃə	literature	'litərətʃə
creature	'kri:tʃə	future	'fju:tʃə
moisture	'mɔistʃə	mixture	'mikstʃə

-sure ʒə

pleasure	'pleʒə	leisure	'leʒə
treasure	'treʒə	closure	'klouʒə

N.B.: pressure 'preʃə

-able əbl

enjoyable	in'dʒɔiəbl	payable	'peiəbl
comfortable	'kʌmftəbl	miserable	'mizrəbl
desirable	di'zaiərəbl	capable	'keipəbl
changeable	'tʃeindʒəbl	agreeable	ə'griəbl
valuable	'væljuəbl	amiable	'eimjəbl

-ible ibl

sensible	'sensibl	possible	'pɔsibl
negligible	'neglidʒibl	invisible	in'vizibl

-ile ail

domicile	'dɔmisail	mobile	'moubail
juvenile	'dʒu:vənail	docile	'dousail
reptile	'reptail	exile	'eksail
fertile	'fə:tail	hostile	'hɔstail

-ey i

journey	'dʒə:ni	money	'mʌni
jockey	'dʒɔki	honey	'hʌni
storey	'stɔ:ri	alley	'æli
jersey	'dʒə:zi	kidney	'kidni

N.B.: survey 'sə:vei

-ow ou

tomorrow	tə'mɔrou	follow	'fɔlou
bungalow	'bʌŋgəlou	narrow	'nærou
shadow	'ʃædou	yellow	'jelou
elbow	'elbou	widow	'widou

N.B.: somehow 'sʌmhau
eyebrow 'aibrau

1724
LONGMANS